THE SOULES CONFLICT with it selfe, AND VICTORY over it selfe by *Faith*.

A Treatise of the inward disquietments of distressed spirits, with comfortable remedies to establish them.

Returne unto thy rest O my soule, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

By *R. Sibbs* D. D. Master of *Katherine Hall* in Cambridge, and Preacher of *Grayes Inne* London.

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TO

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL

Sir *John Banks* Knight, the Kings Majeſties Attourney General,

Sir *Edward Moſely* Knight, His Majeſties Attourney of the Duchie,

Sir *William Denny* Knight, one of the Kings learned Councel,

Sir *Dudly Digges* Knight, one of the Maſters of the Chancery,

And the reſt of the Worſhipfull *Readers* and *Benchers*, with the *Ancients*, *Barreſters*, *Students*, and all others belonging to the Honourable Society of *Grayes-Inne*.

R. SIBBES Dedicateth theſe Sermons Preached amongſt them, in teſtimony of his due Obſervance, and deſire of their ſpiritual and eternal good.

To the Christian Reader.

THere be two sorts of people alwaies in the visible Church; One that Satan keeps under with false peace, whose life is nothing but a diversion to present contentments, and a running away from God and their own hearts, which they know can speak no good unto them, these speak peace to themselves, but God speaks none. Such have nothing to do with this *Scripture*; the way for these men to enjoy comfort, is to be soundly troubled. True peace arises from knowing the worst first, and then our freedom from it. It is a miserable peace that riseth from ignorance of evil. The Angel *troubled the waters*, and then cured those that stept in. It is Christs manner to trouble our souls first, and then to come with healing in his wings. John 5.

But there is another sort of people, who being drawn out of *Satans* kingdome, and within the Covenant of grace, whom *Satan* labours to unsettle and disquiet: being the *god of the world*, he is vexed to see men in the world, walk *above* the world. Since he cannot hinder their estate, he will trouble their peace, and damp their spirits, & cut asunder the sinews of all their endeavours. These should take themselves to taske as *David* doth here, and labour to maintain their portion, and the glory of a Christian profession. For whatsoever is in God, or comes from God, is for their comfort. *Himself* is the God of comfort; his *Spirit* most known by that office. Our blessed Saviour was so careful that his *Disciples* should not be too much dejected, that he forgat his own bitter passion to comfort them, whom yet he knew would all forsake him: *let not your hearts be troubled*, saith he. And his own soul was troubled to death, that we should not be troubled: *whatsoever is written is written for this end*; every article of *faith* hath a special influence in comforting a believing soul, They are not only food, but cordials; Yea, he put himself to his *Oath*, that we might not onely have *Consolation*, but strong *Consolation*. The Sacraments seal unto us all the comforts we have by the death of

Christ; the exercise of Religion, as *Prayer, Hearing, Reading, &c.* is that *our joy may be full*: the *Communion of Saints* is chiefly ordained to *comfort the feeble minded*, and to *strengthen the weak*. Gods government of his Church tends to this. Why doth he sweeten our pilgrimage, and let us see so many comfortable daies in the world, but that we should serve him with cheerful and good hearts? As for crosses, he doth but cast us down, to raise us up, and empty us that he may fill us, and melt us that we may be *vessels of glory*, loving us as well in the furnace, as when we are out, and standing by us all the while. *We are troubled, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken.* If we consider from what *fatherly love* afflictions come, how they are not only moderated, but sweetned and sanctified in the issue to us, how can it but minister matter of comfort in the greatest seeming discomforts? How then can we let the reins of our affections loose to sorrow without being injurious to God and his providence? as if we would teach him how to govern his Church.

2 Cor. 4.8.

What unthankfulness is it to forget our consolation, and to look only upon matter of grievance? to think so much upon two or three crosses, as to forget a hundred blessings? To suck poison out of that, from which we should suck honey? What folly is it to straiten, and darken our own spirits? and indispose our selves from doing or taking good? A limb out of joynt can do nothing without deformity and pain; dejection takes off the wheels of the soul.

Of all other, Satan hath most advantage of discontented persons, as most agreeable to his disposition, being the most discontented creature under heaven; He hammers all his dark plots in their brains. The discontentment of the *Israelites in the wilderness*, provoked God to *swear*, that *they should never enter into his rest*. There is *another spirit in my servant Caleb*, saith God; the spirit of Gods people is an incouraging spirit. Wisdome teaches them, if they feel any grievances to conceal them from others that are weaker, lest they be disheartned. God threatens it as a *curse* to give a *trembling heart*, and *sorrow*

Ps. 95. ult.

Deu. 28. 65

of

of minde; whereas on the contrary, *joy* is as oyl to the ſoul, it makes duties come off cheerfully and ſweetly from our ſelves, graciouſly to others, and acceptably to God. A *Prince* cannot endure it in his ſubjects, nor a Father in his children to be lowring at their preſence. Such uſually have ſtollen waters to delight themſelves in.

How many are there that upon the diſgrace that followes Religion, are frighted from it? But what are diſcouragements, to the incouragements Religion brings with it? which are ſuch as the very angels themſelves admire at. Religion indeed brings croſſes with it, but then it brings comforts *above* thoſe croſſes. What a diſhonour is it to religion to conceive that God will not maintain and honour his followers? as if his ſervice were not the beſt ſervice; what a ſhame is it for an heir of heaven to be caſt down for every petty loſs and croſs? to be afraid of a man whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, in not ſtanding to a good cauſe, when we are ſure God will ſtand by us, aſſiſting and comforting us, whoſe preſence is able to make the greateſt torments ſweet?

Tua præſentia Domine, Laurentio ipſam craticulam dulcem fecit.

My diſcourſe tends not to take men off from all grief and mourning? *Light for the righteous is ſown in ſorrow.* Our ſtate of abſence from the Lord, and living here in a vale of tears, our daily infirmities, and our ſympathy with others, requires it; and where moſt grace is, there is moſt ſenſibleneſs, as in Chriſt. But we muſt diſtinguiſh betweeng rief, and that ſullenneſs and dejection of ſpirit, which is with a repining and taking off from duty; when *Joſhua* was overmuch caſt down at Iſraels turning their backs before their enemies, God reproves him, *Get thee up* Joſhua, *why lieſt thou upon thy face?* *Judg.* 7. 10.

Some would have men after the committing of groſſe ſinnes to be preſently comfortable, and *believe* without humbling themſelves at all; indeed when we are once in Chriſt, we ought not to queſtion our ſtate in him; and if we doe, it comes not from the *Spirit*: But yet a guilty conſcience will be clamorous and full of objections, and God will not ſpeak peace unto it till it be humbled. God will let his beſt children know what it is to be too bold with ſinne, as we ſee in *David* and *Peter*, who felt

felt no peace till they had renued their repentance: The way to rejoyce *with joy unspeakable and glorious*, is to stirre up sighs *that cannot be uttered*. And it is so farre, that the knowledge of our state in grace should not humble us, that very ingenuity considering Gods love to us, out of the nature of the thing it selfe works sorrow and shame in us, to offend his Majesty.

One main stop that hinders Christians from rejoycing, is, that they give themselves too much liberty to question their grounds of comfort and interest in the promises. This is wonderful comfortable say they, but what is it to me? the promise belongs not to *me*. This ariseth from want of giving all *diligence to make their calling sure* 2 Pet. 10. to themselves. In watchfulnes and diligence we sooner meet with comfort then in idle complaining. Our care therefore should be to get sound *evidence* of a good estate, and then likewise to keep our *evidence clear*; wherein we are not to hearken to our own fears & doubts, or the suggestion of our enemy, who studies to falsifie our *evidence*; but to the *Word*, and our own consciences inlightned by the Spirit: and then it is pride and pettishnes to stand out against comfort to themselves. Christians should study to corroborate their title; we are never more in heaven, before we come thither, then when we can read our evidences: It makes us converse much with God, it sweetens all conditions, and makes us willing to doe and suffer any thing. It makes us have comfortable and honourable thoughts of our selves, as too good for the service of any base lust, and brings confidence in God both in life and death.

But what if our condition be so darke, that we cannot read our evidence at all?

Here look up to Gods infinite mercy in Christ, as we did at the first when we found no goodnes in our selves, and that is the way to recover whatever we think we have lost. By honouring Gods mercy in Christ, we come to have the Spirit of Christ; therefore when the waters of sanctification are troubled and muddy, let us run to the witness of *blood*. God seems to walke sometimes contrary to himself; he seems to discourage, when secretly he

he doth encourage, as the *woman of Canaan*; but faith can finde out these waies of God, and untie these knots, by looking to the free promise and merciful nature of God. Let our sottish and rebellious flesh murmure as much as it will, *who art thou? and what is thy worth?* Yet a Christian *knows whom he believes*. *Faith* hath learned to set God against all.

Again, we must go on to *adde grace to grace*. A growing and fruitful Christian, is alwaies a comfortable Christian; the oyle of *grace* brings forth the oyle of *gladness*. Christ is first a King of *righteousness*, and then a King of *peace*; the righteousness that he works by his Spirit brings a peace of *sanctification*, whereby though we are not freed from sin, yet we are enabled to combat with it, and to get the victory over it. Some degree of comfort follows every good action, as heat accompanies fire, and as beams and influences issue from the *Sun*; which is so true, that very *Heathens* upon the discharge of a good conscience, have found comfort and peace answerable; this is a reward before our reward. Heb. 7.2. *Præmium ante præmium.*

Another thing that hinders the comfort of Christians is, that they forget what a gracious and merciful covenant they live under, wherein the perfection that is required is to be found in Christ. Perfection in us is sincerity: What is the end of *faith* but to bring us to Christ? Now imperfect faith, if sincere, knits to Christ, in whom our perfection lies.

Gods designe in the covenant of grace is to exalt the riches of his mercy, above all sin and unworthiness of man; and we yield him more glory of his mercy by believing, then it would be to his justice to destroy us. If we were perfect in our selves, we should not honour him so much, as when we labour to be found in Christ, having his righteousness upon us.

There is no one portion of Scripture oftner used to fetch up drooping spirits than this, *Why art thou cast down O my soul?* it is figurative, and full of Rhetorique, and all little enough to perswade the perplexed soul quietly *to trust in God*; which without this retiring into our selves and checking our hearts, will never be brought to passe.

Homil. in Gen.

Chrysostome brings in a man loaden with troubles, coming into the *Church*, where when he heard this passage read, he presently recovered himself, & becomes another man. As *David* therefore did acquaint himself with this form of dealing with his soul, so let us, demanding a reason of our selves *Why we are cast down*; which will at least check and put a stop to the distress, and make us fit to consider more solid grounds of true comfort.

Of necessity the soul must be something calmed and staid before it can be comforted. Whilst the humours of the body rage in a great distemper, there is no giving of physick: So when the soul gives way to passion, it is unfit to entertain any counsel, therefore it must be stilled by degrees, that it may hear reason; and sometimes it is fitter to be moved with ordinary reason, (as being more familiar unto it) then with higher reasons fetcht from our supernatural condition in Christ, as from the condition of mans nature subject to changes, from the uncomelines of yeelding to passion for that, which it is not in our power to mend, &c. these and such like reasons have some use to stay the fit for a while, but they leave the core untouched, which is *sin*, the trouble of all troubles. Yet when such considerations are made spiritual by *faith* on higher grounds, they have some operation upon the soul, as the influence of the *Moon* having the stronger influence of the *Sun* mingled with it becoms more effectual upon these inferiour bodies. A candle light being ready at hand, is sometimes as useful as the Sun it self.

But our main care should be to have *Evangelicall* grounds of comfort, neer to us. *Reconciliation with God*, whereby all things else are reconciled to us, *Adoption* and *Communion with Christ*, &c. which is never sweeter than under the Cross. *Philip Lansgrave* of *Hesse*, being a long time prisoner under *Charles the fifth*, was demanded what upheld him all that time? who answered, that *he felt the divine comforts of the Martyrs*: there be *divine comforts* which are felt under the *Crosse*, and not at other times.

Respondit, divinas consolationes Martyrum se sensisse.

Besides personal troubles, there are many much dejected with the present state of the Church, seeing the bloud of

of ſo many Saints to be ſhed, and the enemies oft to prevail; but God hath ſtratagems, as *Joſhua*, at *Ai*; he ſeems ſometimes to retire that he may come upon his enemies with the greater advantage; the end of all theſe troubles will no doubt be the ruine of the Antichriſtian faction; and we ſhall ſee the Church in her more perfect beauty when the enemies ſhall be in that place which is fitteſt for them, the *loweſt*, that is, the *footſtool of Chriſt*; the Church as it is higheſt in the favour of God, ſo it ſhall be the higheſt in it ſelfe. *The mountain of the Lord ſhall be exalted above all mountains.* In the worſt condition, the Church hath two faces, one towards heaven and Chriſt, which is alwaies conſtant and glorious: another toward the world, which is in appearance contemptible and changable. But God will in the end give her beauty for aſhes, and glory double to her ſhame, and ſhe ſhall in the end prevail: in the mean time, the power of the enemies is in Gods hand: The Church of God conquers when it is conquered: even as our Head Chriſt did, who overcame by patience as well as by power. Chriſts victory was upon the Croſs. The Spirit of a Chriſtian conquers, when his perſon is conquered.

Robur hoſtium apud Deum.

The way is, inſtead of diſcouragement, to ſearch all the promiſes made to the Church in theſe latter times, and to turn them into prayers, and preſs God earneſtly for the performance of them. Then we ſhall ſoon finde God both *curſing* his enemies, and *bleſſing* his people out of *Zion*, by the faithful prayers that aſcend up from thence.

In all the *promiſes* we ſhould have ſpecial recourſe to God in them. In all ſtorms there is Sea-room enough in the infinite goodneſs of God, for faith to be carried with ſul ſail.

And it muſt be remembred that in all places where God is mentioned, we are to underſtand God in the promiſed *Meſſiah*, typified out ſo many wales unto us. And to put the more vigour into ſuch places in the reading of them, we in this latter age of the Church muſt think of God ſhining upon *us* in the face of Chriſt, and *our* Father in him. If they had ſo much confidence in ſo little light, it

it is a shame for us not to be confident in good things, when so strong a light shines round about us: when we professe we believe *a crown of righteousnes is laid up for all those that love his appearing.* Presenting these things to the soul by *faith*, setteth the soul in such a pitch of resolution, that no discouragements are able to seize upon it *We faint not*, saith S. *Paul*: wherefore doth he not faint? because *these light and short afflictions procure an exceeding weight of glory.*

Ego miserrimas curas, quibus te consumi scribis, vehementer odi. Quod sic regnat in corde tuo, non est magnitudo causæ, sed magnitudo incredulitatis nostræ. Si causa falsa est, revocemus; Si vera, cur facimus illum tantis promissis mendacem? Luctare contra teipsum maximum hostem.

2 Cor. 1. ult.

Luther when he saw *Melanchthon* a godly and learned man too much dejected for the state of the Church in those times, falls a chiding of him as *David* doth here his own soul, *I strongly hate those miserable cares*, saith he, *whereby thou writest thou art even spent. It is not the greatness of the cause, but the greatness of our incredulity. If the cause be false, let us revoke it. If true, why do we make God in his rich promises a liar? Strive against thy self, the greatest enemy; why do we fear the conquered world, that have the Conquerer himself on our side?*

Now to speak something concerning the publishing of this Treatise. I began to preach on the Text about twelve years since in the *City*, and afterwards finished the same at *Grayes-Inne*. After which, some having gotten imperfect Notes, endeavoured to publish them without my privity. Therefore to do my self right, I thought fit to reduce them to this form. There is a pious and studious Gentleman of *Grayes Inne*, that hath of late published Observations upon the whole *Psalm*; and another upon this very *Verse* very well: And many others by Treatises of *Faith* and such like, have furthered the spiritual peace of Christians much. It were to be wished that we would all joyn to do that which the Apostles gloried in, *to be helpers of the joy of Gods people.* Some will be ready to deprave the labours of other men; but, so good may be done, let such ill disposed persons be what they are, and what they will be unless God turn their hearts: and so I commend thee and this poor Treatise to Gods blessing.

GRAYES-INNE,
July 1. 1635.

R. SIBBES.

Rich. Sibbs died July 5. 1635 See Brook's Lives of Puritans

The Contents of this BOOK, in the ſeveral CHAPTERS.

1 *GEneral Obſervations upon the Text.* pag. 4.

2 *Of diſcouragements from without.* 11

3 *Of diſcouragements from within.* 19

4 *Of caſting down our ſelves, and ſpecially by ſorrow. Evils thereof.* 38

5 *Remedies of caſting down: To cite the ſoul, and preſs it to give an account.* 47

6 *Other obſervations of the ſame nature* 58

7 *Difference between good men and others in conflicts with ſin.* 76

8 *Of unfitting dejection: and when it is exceſſive. And what is the right temper of the ſoul herein.* 81

9 *Of the ſouls diſquiets, Gods dealings, and power to contain our ſelves in order.* 98

10 *Means not to be over-charged with ſorrow.* 106

11 *Signes of victory over our ſelves, and of a ſubdued ſpirit.* 128

12 *Of original righteouſneſs, natural corruption, Satans joyning with it, and our duty thereupon.* 138

13 *Of*

13. *of imagination: sin of it, and remedies for it.* 157
14 *Of help by others: of true comforters, and their graces. Method. Ill success.* 199
15 *Of flying to God in disquiets of soul. Eight observations out of the Text.* 217
16 *Of trust in God: grounds of it: specially his providence* 235
17 *Of graces to be exercised in respect of divine providence.* 249
18 *Other grounds of trusting in God: namely, the promises. And twelve directions about the same.* 264
19 *Faith to be prized, and other things undervalued, at least not to be trusted to as the chief.* 284
20 *Of the method of trusting in God: and the triall of that trust.* 296
21 *Of quieting the spirit in troubles for sin, And objections answered.* 312
22 *Of sorrow for sin, and hatred of sin, when right and sufficient. Helps thereto.* 332
23 *Other spiritual causes of the souls trouble, discovered, and removed: and objections answered.* 347
24 *Of outward troubles disquieting the spirit; and comforts in them.* 354
25 *Of the defects of gifts, disquieting the soul.*

soul. As also the afflictions of the Church. 365

26 *Of divine reasons in a believer, of his minding to praise God more than to be delivered.* 373

27 *In our worst condition we have cause to praise God. Still ample cause in these dayes.* 383

28 *Diverse qualities of the praise due to God. With helps therein. And notes of Gods hearing our prayers* 390

29 *Of Gods manifold salvation for his people. And why open, or expressed in the countenance* 418

30 *Of God, our God, and of particular application.* 430

31 *Means of proving and evidencing to our souls, that God is our God.* 447

32 *Of improving our evidences for comfort in several passages of our lives.* 458

33 *Of experience, and Faith, and how to wait on God comfortably. Helps thereto.* 477

34 *Of confirming this trust in God. Seek it of God himself. Sins hinder not: nor Satan. Conclusion and Soliloquie.* 495

IN OPUS POSTHUMUM ADMODUM REVERENDI,

mihíque multis Nominibus colendi, *Richardi Sibs*, S. T. Profeſſoris, Aulæ Stæ Cath. Præfecti digniſsmi.

Vade Liber, *pie* Dux *Animæ*, *pie Mentis* Achates,
Te *relegens Fructu ne pereunte legat*,
Quam fœlix prodis ! *Præ* ſacro Codice *ſordent*,
Bartole, *ſive tui* ; *ſive*, Galene, *tui*.

Fidus Præco Dei, *cœleſtis* Cultor *Agelli*
Aſſidui Pretium grande Laboris habet :
Quo mihi nec Vitâ *melior*, *nec promptior* Ore,
Gratior aut Vultu, *nec fuit* Arte *prior*.

Nil opus ut Nardum Caro *combibat uncta Sabæum*,
Altáve marmoreus Sydera tangat Apex :
Non eget Hic Urnâ, *non* Marmore ; *nempe* Volumen
Stat Sacrum, *vivax* Marmor, & Urna, Pio.

Qui Chriſto *vivens inceſſit Tramite Cœli*,
Æthereúmque obiit Munus, *obire nequit* :
Ducit Hic Angelicis æqualia ſæcula Luſtris,
Qui Verbo *Studium contulit omne ſuum*.

Perlegat

Perlegat Hunc Legum Cultrix Veneranda *Senectus,*
Et quos plena Deo *Mens ſuper Aſtra vehit:*
Venduntur (quanti!) *circum Palatia* Fumi!
Hic ſacer *Altaris Carbo* minoris *erit?*

Heu! Pietas *ubi priſca? profana ô Tempora! Mundi*
Fax! Veſper! prope nox! ô Mora! Chriſte *veni.*
Si valuere Preces *unquam, & Cuſtodia Chriſti,*
Nunc opus eſt Precibus, *nunc* Ope, *Chriſte, tuâ.*

Certat in humanis Vitiorum Infamia *rebus,*
Hei mihi! nulla novis ſufficit Herba *Malis?*
Probra *referre pudet; nec enim decet: Exprobret illa*
Qui volet; Eſt noſtrum flere, ſilendo queri.

Flere? Tonabo tuas, Pietas neglecta, *Querelas:*
Quid non Schiſma, Tepor, faſtus, *&* Aſtus *agunt?*
Addo-Sed Hiſtoricus Tacitus *fuit optimus. Immo*
Addam —— Sphærarum at Muſica muta *placet*

EDVº: BENLOSIO.

Creſſingæ Templariorum
Prid. Cal. Febr.
MDCXXXV.

On the Work of my learned Friend DOCTOR SIBBS.

FOole that I was! to think my eaſie Pen
Had ſtrength enough to glorifie the fame
Of this known Author, this rare Man of Men;
Or give the leaſt advantage to his name. (bright,
Who think, by praiſe, to make his name more
*S*how the *S*uns Glory, by dull Candle-light.

Bleſt *S*aint! thy hallow'd Pages do require
No ſlight preferment from our ſlender Layes:
We ſtand amaz'd, at what we moſt admire;
Ah, what are *S*aints the better for our praiſe!
He that commends this Volume, does no more
Then warme the fire, or gild the maſſie Ore.

Let me ſtand ſilent then. O may that *S*pirit,
Which led thy hand, direct mine eye, my breſt:
That I may read, and doe; and ſo inherit
(What thou enjoy'ſt and taught'ſt) eternal Reſt!
Fool that I was! to think my Lines could give
Life to that work, by which they hope to live.

FRA: QUA:

THE SOVLES Conflict with it Selfe.

PSAL. XLII.

Why art thou caſt down O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

THE *Pſalms* are, (as it were) the Anatomy of a holy man, which lay the inſide of a truely devout man outward to the view of others. If the Scriptures be compared to a body, the *Pſalms* may well be the heart, they are ſo full of ſweet affections, and paſſions. For in other portions of Scripture God ſpeaks to us; but in the *Pſalms* holy men ſpeak to God and their own hearts: as

In this *Pſalm*, we have *the paſſionate paſſages of a broken and troubled ſpirit.*

At this time *David* was a baniſhed man, baniſhed from his own houſe, from his friends,& which troubled him moſt,from the houſe of God, upon occaſion of *Sauls* perſecution, who hunted him as a Partridge upon the mountains. See how this works upon him.

1. 1. *He layes open his deſire ſpringing from his love.* Love being the prime and leading affection of the ſoul from whence grief ſprings,from beingcroſſed in thatwe love. For the ſetting out of which his affection to the full, he borroweth an expreſſion from the Hart; no Hart being chaſed by
Verſe 1. the hunters, *panteth more after the waters*, then my heart doth *after thee O God*: though he found God preſent with him in exile,yet there is a ſweeter preſence of him in his ordinances which now he wanted and took to heart: places and conditions are happy or miſerable, as God vouchſafeth his gracious preſence more or leſs; and therefore, *When, O when ſhall it be, that I appear before God?*

2. 2. Then after his ſtrong deſire,*he laies out his grief*, which he could not contain, but muſt needs give a vent to it in tears: and he had ſuch a ſpring of grief in him,

as

as fed his *tears day and night*; all the ease he found was to dissolve this cloud of grief into the showre of tears. Verse 2.

But, *why gives he this way to his grief?* *Quest.*

Because together with his exiling from Gods house, he was upbraided by his enemies, with his religion: *where is now thy God?* Grievances come not alone, but (as *Jobs* messengers) follow one another. These bitter taunts, together with the remembrance of his former happiness in communion with God in his house, made deep impressions in his soul, when he *remembred how he went with the multitude into the house of God*, and led a goodly train with him, being willing as a good Magistrate, and Master of a familie, not to goe to the house of God alone, nor to heaven alone, but to carry as many as he could with him; Oh! the remembrance of this made him powre forth (not his words or his tears only, but) his very soul. *Former favours and happiness makes the soul more sensible of all impressions to the contrary*; hereupon finding his soul over sensible, he expostulates with himself, *Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? &c.* *Answ.* Verse 3. Verse 4.

Chap. 1. But though the remembrance of the former ſweetneſs of Gods preſence did ſomewhat ſtay him, yet his grief would not ſo be ſtilled, and therefore it gathers
Verſe 7. upon him again; *one grief called upon another*, as one deep wave follows another without intermiſſion, untill his ſoul was almoſt over-whelm'd under theſe waters; yet he recovers himſelf a little with looking up to God, who he expected would with ſpeed and authority ſend forth *his loving kindneſs* with command to raiſe him up and comfort him, and give him matter
Verſe 8. of *ſongs in the night*. For all this, his unruly grief will not be calmed, but renues
Verſe 10. aſſaults upon the return of the reproach of his enemies. Their words were *as ſwords* unto him, and his heart being made very tender and ſenſible of grief, theſe ſharp words enter too deep; and thereupon he hath recourſe to his former remedy (as being the moſt tried) to chide his ſoul, and charge it to truſt in God.

CHAP. I.

General Obſervations upon the Text.

Obſer. 1. HEnce in general we may obſerve; that *Grief gathered to a head will not bee quieted*,

quieted at the first. We see here passions intermingled with comforts, and comforts with passions, & what bustling there is, before *David* can get the victory over his own heart: You have some short spirited Christians, that if they be not comforted at the first, they think all labour with their hearts is in vain, and thereupon give way to their grief. But we see in *David*, as distemper ariseth upon distemper, so he gives check upon check, and charge upon charge to his soul, untill at length he brought it to a quiet temper. In Physick, if one purge will not carry away the vicious humour, then we adde a second: if that will not do it, we take a third. So should we deal with our souls, perhaps one check, one charge will not do it, then fall upon the soul again; send it to God again, and never give over untill our souls be possessed of our souls again. Chap. 1.

Again, In generall observe in *Davids* spirit, that *a gracious and living soul is most sensible of the want of spirituall meanes.* *Obser.* 2.

The reason is because spirituall life hath answerable taste, and hunger and thirst after spiritual helps. *Reason.*

We

Chap. 1. *Acrius urgent quæ necessitatis sunt, quam quæ spectant ad voluptatem.*

We see in nature, that those things press hardest upon it, that touch upon the necessities of nature, rather than those that touch upon delights, for these further only our comfortable being; but necessities uphold our being it self: we see how famine wrought upon the Patriarchs to go into Ægypt: Where we may see what to judge of those who willingly excommunicate themselves from the assemblies of Gods people, where the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are present, where the prayers of holy men meet together in one, and as it were binde God and pull down Gods blessing. No private devotion hath that report of acceptance from heaven.

Obser. 3. A third general point is, that *a godly soul by reason of the life of grace, knows when it is well with it, and when it is ill, when it is a good day with it, and when a bad*; when God shines in the use of means, then the soul is as it were in Heaven; when God withdraws himself, then it is in darkness for a time. Where there is but only a principle of nature without sanctifying grace, there men go plodding on and keep their rounds, & are at the end where they were at the beginning; not troubled with changes,

ges, because there is nothing within to be troubled; and therefore dead means, quick means, or no means, all is one with them, an argument of a dead soul. And so we come more particularly & directly to the words. *Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? &c.* Chap. 1.

The words imply, 1. *Davids* state wherein he was, and 2 expres his carriage in that state. *Parts.*

His state was such that in regard of outward condition, he was in variety of troubles; and that in regard of inward disposition of spirit, he was first *cast down*, and then *disquieted*. 1.

Now for his carriage of himself in this condition, and disposition, hee dealeth roundly with himself: *David* reasoneth the case with *David*, and first checketh himself for being too much *cast down*, and then for being too much *disquieted*. 2.

And then layeth a charge upon himself *to trust in God*; wherein we have the duty he chargeth upon himself, which is to *trust in God*, and the grounds of the duty;

First, from confidence of better times to come, which would yeeld him matter of *praising God*. 1.

And

Chap. 1. 2.

And then by a repreſentation of God unto him, as a ſaving God in all troubles, nay, as ſalvation it ſelfe, an open glorious Saviour in the view of all, *The ſalvation of my countenance*, and all this enforced from *Davids* intereſt in God, *He is my God.*

Obſer. 1. Whence obſerve, firſt, from the ſtate he was now in, that *ſince guilt and corruption hath been derived by the fall, into the nature of man, it hath been ſubjected to miſery and ſorrow, and in that all conditions from the King that ſitteth on the Throne to him that grindeth at the mil.* None ever hath been ſo good or ſo great, as could raiſe themſelves ſo high as to be above the reach of *troubles.*

1. Chriſt the Head was a man of many ſorrows.

And that choice part of mankinde, the firſt fruits and excellency of the reſt, (which we call the Church) more then others, which appears by conſideration, both of the *Head*, the *Body* and *members* of the Church. For the *Head* Chriſt, he took our fleſh as it was ſubject to miſery after the fall, and was (in regard of that which he endured) both in life and death, a man of ſorrows.

2. The *Church* hath been, and is full of ſorrows.

For the *Body* the Church, It may ſay from the firſt to the laſt as it is *Pſal.* 129. *From my youth up they have afflicted me.*

The

Chap. 1.

The Church began in blood, hath grown up by blood, and ſhall end in blood, as it was redeemed by blood.

3. The members of the Church have been and are full of croſſes.

For the members, they are all predeſtinate to a conformity to Chriſt their Head, as in grace and glory, ſo in abaſement *Rom.*8.29. Neither is it a wonder, for thoſe that are born ſouldiers to meet with conflicts, for travailers to meet with hard uſage, for ſea-men to meet with ſtorms, for ſtrangers in a ſtrange country (eſpecially amongſt their enemies) to meet with ſtrange entertainment.

A Chriſtian is a man of another world, and here from home, which he would forget (if he were not exerciſed here) and would take his paſſage for his country. But though all Chriſtians agree and meet in this, that *through many afflictions we muſt enter into heaven*: Yet according to the diverſity of place, parts and grace, there is a different cup meaſured to every one.

Act. 14.22.

Uſe.

And therefore it is but a plea of the fleſh, to except againſt the Croſſe, *Never was poor creature diſtreſſed as I am*: this is but ſelf-love, for was it not the caſe both of Head, Body and members, as we ſee here in *David* a principal member? When he

Chap. 1. he was brought to this case, thus to reason the matter with himself, *Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?*

Obser. 2. From the frame of *Davids* spirit under these troubles, we may observe, that as the case is thus with all Gods people, to be exercised with troubles, *They are sensible of them oftentimes, even to casting down and discouraging.* *Reas.* 1. And the reason is, they are flesh and blood subject to the same passions, and made of the same mould, subject to the same impressions from without as 2. other men; And their nature is upheld with the same supports and refreshings as others, the withdrawing and want of which affecteth them. And besides those troubles they suffer in common with other men, by reason of their new advancement, and their new disposition they have in and 3. from Christ their Head, they are more sensible in a peculiar manner of those troubles that any way touch upon that blessed condition, from a new life they have in & from Christ, which wil better appear if we come more particularly to a discovery of the more special causes of this distemper: some of which are, 1 *Without us.* 2 *Some within us.*

CHAP.

Chap. 2.

CHAP. II.
Of discouragements from without.

Outward causes of discouragement.

1. God *himself*.

1. GOD *himself*: who sometimes withdrawes the beames of his countenance from his children, whereupon the soul even of the strongest Christian is disquieted; when together with the crosse, God himself seems to be an enemy unto them. The child of God when he seeth that his troubles are mixed with Gods displeasure, and perhaps his conscience tells him that God hath a just quarrel against him, because he hath not renewed his peace with his God, then this anger of God puts a sting into al other troubles, and addes to the disquiet. There were some ingredients of this divine temptation (as we call it) in holy *David* at this time: though most properly a divine temptation be, when God appears unto us as an enemy, without any special guilt of any particular sin, as in *Jobs* case.

A divine temptation, what.

And no marvail if Christians be from hence disquieted, when as the Sonne of God himself having always before enjoyed the sweet communion with his Father, and

Chap. 2.

Mat. 27.46

and now feeling an enstrangement, that he might be a curse for us, complained in all his torments of nothing else, but *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* It is with the godly in this case, as with vapours drawn up by the Sun, which (when the extracting force of the Sun leaves them) fall down again to the earth from whence they are drawn. So when the soul, raised up and upheld by the beams of his countenance, is left of God, it presently begins to sink. We see when the body of the Sun is partly hid from us (for totally it cannot in an Eclipse by the body of the Moon) that there is a drouping in the whole frame of nature: so it is in the soul, wn there is any thing that coms between *God's* gracious countenance & it.

2. In regard of Satan, who is all for casting down.

Besides, if we look down to inferiour causes, the soul is oft cast down by Satan, who is all for casting down, and for disquieting. For being a cursed spirit, cast and tumbled down himself from heaven; where he is never to come again, he is here upon full of disquiet, carrying a hell about himself, whereupon all that he labours for, is to cast down and disquiet others, that they may be (as much as he can procure)

cure) in the ſame curſed condition with himſelf. He was not aſhamed to ſet upon Chriſt himſelf with this temptation of caſting down, and thinks Chriſts members never low enough, till he can bring them as low as himſelf. Chap. 2.

By his envie & ſubtilty we were driven out of Paradiſe at the firſt, and now he envies us the Paradiſe of a good conſcience: for that is our Paradiſe untill we come to heaven; into which no ſerpent ſhall ever creep to tempt us. When Satan ſeeth a man ſtrongly and comfortably walk with God, he cannot endure that a creature of meaner rank by creation than himſelf, ſhould enjoy ſuch happineſs. Herein, like (ſome peeviſh men which are his inſtruments) men too contentious, and bred up therein (as the Salamander in the fire) who when they know the cauſe to be naught, and their adverſaries to have the better title; yet (out of malice) they will follow them with ſuits and vexations, though they be not able to diſable their oppoſites title: If their malice have not a vent in hurting ſome way, they will burſt for anger. The Devil envies our happineſs firſt, and laſt.

It is juſt ſo with the Devil when he

Chap. 2.

ſeeth men will to heaven, and that they have good title to it, then he follows them with all dejecting and uncomfortable tentations that he can: it is his continual trade and courſe to ſeek his reſt in our diſquiet, he is by beaten practice and profeſſion, a tempter in this kinde.

3. Satans inſtruments, who are all for caſting down.

Again, what Satan cannot doe himſelf by immediate ſuggeſtions, that he labours to worke by his inſtruments, who are all for caſting down of thoſe who ſtand in their light, as thoſe in the Pſalm, who cry, *Down with him, down with him, even to the ground*; a character and ſtamp of which mens diſpoſitions, we have in the verſe before this Text, *Mine enemies* (ſaith *David*) *reproach me.* As ſweet and as compaſſionate a man as he was, to *pray* and *put on ſackcloth* for them, yet he had enemies, and ſuch *enemies*, as did not ſuffer their malice onely to boile and concoct in their own breaſts, but out of the abundance of their hearts, they reproached him in words. There is nothing the nature of man is more impatient of, then of reproaches; for there is no man ſo mean, but thinks himſelf worthy of ſome regard, and a reproachful ſcorn ſhews an

Pſal. 35. 13.

an utter diſreſpect, which iſſues from the very ſuperfluity of malice. Chap. 2.

Neither went they behind his back, but were ſo impudent to ſay *it to his face:* a malicious heart and a ſlandering tongue goe together, and though ſhame might have ſuppreſſed the uttering of ſuch words, yet their inſolent carriage ſpake as much *in Davids heart:* We may ſee by the language of mens carriage what their heart ſaith, and what their tongue would vent if they dared. Pſal. 39. 1.

And this their malice *was unwearied*, for they ſaid *daily* unto him, as if it had been fed with a continual ſpring: malice is an unſatiable monſter, it will miniſter words, as rage miniſters weapons. But what was that they ſaid ſo reproachfully? and ſaid daily? *where is now thy God?* they upbraid him with his ſingularity, they ſay not now, *where is God?* but, *where is thy God*, that thou doſt boaſt ſo much on, as if thou hadſt ſome ſpecial intereſt in Him? Where we ſee that the ſcope of the devill and wicked men is to ſhake the godlies Faith and confidence in their God: As Satan laboured to divide betwixt Chriſt and his Father; *If thou beeſt* Verſe 3. Matth. 4.

Chap. 2.

the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread; So he labours to divide betwixt Father, and Son, and us: they labour to bring God in jealousie with *David*, as if God had neglected him, bearing himself so much upon God. They had some colour of this, for God at this time had vailed himself from *David*, as he does oft from his best children for the better discovery of the malice of wicked men: And doth not Satan tip the tongues of the enemies of Religion now, to insult over the Church now lying a bleeding? *what becomes of their reformation, of their Gospel?* Nay, rather what's become of your eyes, we may say unto them? For God is neareſt to his children when he seems fartheſt off. *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.* God is with them, and in them, though the wicked be not aware of it; it is all one, as if one should say betwixt the space of the new and old Moon, Where is now the Moon? when as it is never nearer the Sun then at that time.

This was preached in the beginning of the troubles of the Church.

Gen. 22. 14.

Queſt. *Where is now thy God?*

Anſw. In heaven, in earth, in me, every where but in the heart of such as aske such questions, and yet there they shall finde him too

too in his time, filling their conſciences with his wrath; and then, Where is their God? where are their great friends, their riches, their honours, which they ſet up as a god? what can they avail them now? Chap. 2.

But how was *David* affected with theſe reproaches? their words were as ſwords, *as with a ſword in my bones, &c.* they ſpake daggers to him, they cut him to the quick when they toucht him in his God, as if he had neglected his ſervants, when as the Devil himſelfe regards thoſe who ſerve his turn; touch a true godly man in his religion and you touch his life and his beſt freehold, he lives more in his God then in himſelf; ſo that we may ſee here, there is a murther of the tongue, a wounding tongue, as well as a healing tongue: men think themſelves freed from murther, if they kill none, or if they ſhed no blood, whereas they cut others to the heart with bitter words. It is good to extend the Commandment to awake the conſcience the more and breed humility, when men ſee there is a murdering of the tongue. We ſee *David* therefore upon this reproach to be preſently ſo moved, as to fall out with himſelf for it, *Why art thou* Verſe 10.

A murther of the tongue.

Chap. 2.

ſo caſt down and diſquieted O my ſoul? This bitter taunt ranne ſo much in his minde, that he expreſſeth it twice in this Pſalm; He was ſenſible that they ſtruck at God through his ſides; what they ſpake in ſcorne and lightly, he took heavily. And indeed, when religion ſuffers, if there be any heavenly fire in the heart, it will rather break out, then not diſcover it ſelf at all. We ſee by daily experience, that there is a ſpecial force in words uttered from a ſubtle head, a falſe heart, and a ſmooth tongue, to weaken the hearts of Profeſſors, by bringing an evil report upon the ſtrict profeſſion of religion: as the

Judg. 1.24. *cunning* and falſe *ſpies* did upon the *good Land*, as if it were not only in vain, but dangerous to appear for Chriſt in evill times. If the example of ſuch as have faint ſpirits will diſcourage in an army, (as we

Judges 7. ſee in *Gideons* Hiſtory) then what will ſpeech inforced both by example & with ſome ſhew of reaſon doe?

4. Diſcouragement comes from our ſelves,

To let others paſſe, we need not goe further than our ſelves, for to finde cauſes of diſcouragement, there is a ſeminary of them within us. Our fleſh, an enemy ſo much the worſe, by how much the nearer,

nearer, will be ready to upbraid us within us, *where is now thy God?* why ſhould'ſt thou ſtand out in a profeſſion that findes no better entertainment? Chap. 3.

CHAP. III.

Of diſcouragements from within.

BUt to come to ſome particular cauſes within us.

There is cauſe oft in the body of thoſe in whom a melancholy temper prevaileth, darkneſs makes men fearful: Melancholy perſons are in a perpetual darkneſs, all things ſeem black and dark unto them, their ſpirits as it were died black. Now to him that is in darkneſs, all things ſeem black and darke, the ſweeteſt comforts are not lightſome enough unto thoſe that are deep in melancholy. It is (without great watchfulneſs) Satans bath; which he abuſeth as his own weapon to hurt the ſoul, which by reaſon of its ſympathy with the body is ſubject to be miſled: as we ſee where there is a ſuffuſion of the eye by reaſon of diſtemper of humours, or where things are preſented *Simile.*

Chap. 3.

through a glaſs to the eye; things ſeem to be of the ſame colour: ſo, whatſoever is preſented to a melancholy perſon, comes in a dark way to the ſoul. From whence it is, that their fancy being corrupted, they judg amiſſe, even of outward things, as that they are ſick of ſuch and ſuch a diſeaſe, or ſubject to ſuch and ſuch a danger, when it is nothing ſo; how fit are they then to judg of things removed from ſenſe, as of their ſpiritual eſtate in Chriſt?

5. A deluded fancy cauſes diſquietneſſe.

To come to cauſes more neer the ſoul it ſelf, as when there is want of that which ſhould be in it, as of *knowledge* in the *underſtanding &c.* Ignorance (being darkneſs) is full of falſe fears; In the night time men think every buſh a thief; our Forefathers in time of ignorance were frighted with every thing, therefore it is the policy of Popiſh Tyrants taught them from the Prince of Darkneſſe, to keep the people in darkneſs, that ſo they might make them fearful, and then abuſe that fearfulneſs to ſuperſtition; that they might the better rule in their conſciences for their own ends: and that ſo having intangled them with falſe fears, they might heale them again with falſe cures.

2. Cauſes private, of diſcouragement in our ſelves.

1. Ignorance in the underſtanding.

Again,

Chap. 3.

Again, though the ſoul be not ignorant, yet if it be forgetfull and mindleſs, if, as *Heb.* 12. the Apoſtle ſaith, *You have forgot the conſolation that ſpeaks unto you, &c.* We have no more preſent actuall comfort, then we have remembrance: help a godly mans memory, and help his comfort; like unto charcoale which having once been kindled, are the more eaſie to take fire. He that hath formerly known things, takes ready acquaintance of them again (as old friends:) things are not ſtrange to him.

2. Forgetfulneſs cauſeth diſcouragement.

And further, *want of ſetting due price upon comforts*; as the Iſraelites were taxed for ſetting nothing by the pleaſant land. It is a great fault, when (as they ſaid to *Job*) *the conſolation of the Almighty ſeem light, and ſmall unto us*, unleſſe we have ſome outward comfort which we linger after.

3. Not duely priſing of comforts.

Iob 15. 11.

Adde unto this, *a childiſh kinde of peeviſhneſs*: when they have not what they would have, (like children) they throw away all; which (though it be very offenſive to Gods Spirit) yet it ſeiſeth often upon men otherwiſe gracious. *Abraham* himſelf (wanting children) undervalued all

4. A childiſh peeviſhneſs.

Gen. 16.

Chap. 3. 1 Kings.

all other bleſſings. *Jonas*, becauſe he was croſſed of his gourd, was weary of his life. The like may be ſaid of *Elias*, flying from *Jezebel*. This peeviſhneſs is increaſed by a too much flattering of their grief, ſo farre as to juſtifie it; like *Jonas*, *I do well to be angry even unto death*, he would ſtand to it. Some with *Rachel* are ſo peremptory, that they *will not be comforted*, as if they were in love with their grievances. Wilful men are moſt vexed in their croſſes: It is not for thoſe to be wilfull that have not a great meaſure of wiſdome to guide their wills; for God delights to have his will of thoſe that are wedded to their own wills: as in *Pharaoh*. No men more ſubject to diſcontentments, then thoſe who would have all things after their own way.

Jonah 4.9.

Jer. 31. 15.

5. False reasoning, erroneous diſcourſe.

Again, one main ground is, *Falſe reaſoning*, and error in our diſcourſe, as that we have no grace when we feel none: feeling is not alwaies a fit rule to judge our ſtates by; that God hath rejected us, becauſe we are croſſed in outward things, when as this iſſues from Gods wiſdome and love. How many imagine their *failings* to be *fallings*, and their *fallings* to be

be *fallings away? Infirmities* to be *Presumptions:* every *ſin againſt Conſcience*, to be the ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt?* unto which miſapprehenſions, weak and darke ſpirits are ſubject. And Satan (as a cunning Rhetorician) here inlargeth the fancy, to apprehend things bigger than they are, Satan abuſeth confident ſpirits another contrary way: to apprehend great ſins as little, and little as none. Some alſo think that they have no grace, becauſe they have not ſo much as grown Chriſtians: whereas, there be ſeveral ages in Chriſt. Some again are ſo deſirous and inlarged after what they have not, that they mind not what they have. Men may be rich, though they have no millions, and be not Emperors.

A double cunning of Satan, according to the humor of his patients.

Likewiſe, ſome are much troubled, becauſe they proceed by a falſe method and order in judging of their eſtates. They will begin with *Election*, which is the higheſt ſtep of the ladder; whereas they ſhould begin from a worke of grace wrought within their hearts, from Gods calling them by his Spirit, and their anſwer to his call, and ſo raiſe themſelves upwards to know their *Election* by their anſwer

6.

A falſe method and order in judging of our eſtates.

Chap. 3. 2 Pet. 1.

anſwer to Gods calling. *Give all diligence* ſaith *Peter*, to make your *calling* and *election ſure*: your *election* by your *calling*. God deſcends down unto us from *election* to *calling*: and ſo to ſanctification: we muſt aſcend to him beginning where he ends. Otherwiſe it is as great folly as in removing of a pile of wood, to begin at the loweſt firſt, and ſo (beſides the needleſs trouble) to be in danger to have the reſt to fall upon our heads. Which beſides ignorance argues pride, appearing in this, that they would bring God to their conceits, and be at an end of their work before they begin.

This great ſecret of Gods eternal love to us in Chriſt, is hidden in his breaſt, and doth not appear to us, untill in the uſe of means God by his Spirit diſcovereth the ſame to us; The Spirit letteth into the ſoul ſo much life and ſenſe of Gods love in particular to us, as draweth the ſoul to Chriſt, from whom it draweth ſo much vertue as changeth the frame of it, and quickneth it to duty, which duties are not grounds of our ſtate in grace, but iſſues, ſpringing from a good ſtate before, and thus farre they help us, in judg-

ing

Chap. 3.

ing of our condition, that though they be not to be reſted in, yet as ſtreams they lead us to the ſpring-head of grace from whence they ariſe.

And of ſignes, ſome be more apt to deceive us, as being not ſo certain, as *delight and joy in hearing the Word*, as appeareth in the *third ground*: ſome are more conſtant and certain, as love to thoſe that are truly good, and to all ſuch, and becauſe they are ſuch, &c. theſe as they are wrought by the Spirit, ſo the ſame Spirit giveth evidence to the ſoul of the truth of them, and leadeth us to faith from whence they come, and faith leads us to the diſcovery of Gods love made known to us in hearing the word opened. The ſame Spirit openeth the truth to us, and our underſtandings to conceive of it, and our hearts to cloſe with it by faith, not only as a truth, but as a truth belonging to us.

Mat. 13. 20.

Now this faith is manifeſted, either by it ſelfe reflecting upon it ſelf the light of faith, diſcovering both it ſelfe and other things, or by the cauſe of it, or by the effect, or by all; Faith is oft more known to us in the fruit of it, then in it ſelfe; as in

Chap. 3. in plants, the fruits are more apparent then the ſap and root. But the moſt ſetled knowledge is from the cauſe, as when I know I believe, becauſe in hearing Gods gracious promiſes opened & offered unto me, the Spirit of God carrieth my ſoul to cleave to them as mine own portion. Yet the moſt familiar way of knowledge of our eſtates is from the effects to gather the cauſe, the cauſe being often times more remote and ſpiritual, the effects more obvious and viſible. All the vigour & beauty in nature which we ſee, comes from a ſecret influence from the heavens which we ſee not; In a clear morning we may ſee the beams of the Sun ſhining upon the top of hills and houſes before we can ſee the Sun it ſelfe.

Eph. 1. 13.

Things in the working of them, doe iſſue from the cauſe, by whoſe force they had their being; but our knowing of things ariſeth from the effect, where the cauſe endeth; we know God muſt love us before we can love him, and yet we oft *firſt* know that *we love him*; the love of God is the cauſe why we love our brother, and yet we know we love *our brother whom we ſee* more clearly, *then God whom we do not ſee.*

1 John 4. 19.

Ver 20.

It

Chap. 3.

It is a ſpiritual peeviſhneſs that keeps men in a perplexed condition, that they neglect theſe helps to judge of their eſtates by, whereas God takes liberty to help us ſometime to a diſcovery of our eſtate by the effects, ſometimes by the cauſe, &c. And it is a ſin to ſet light by any work of the Spirit, and the comfort we might have by it, and therefore we may well adde this as one cauſe of diſquietneſſe in many, that they grieve the Spirit, by quarrelling againſt themſelves, and the work of the Spirit in them.

Comfort ſought in ſanctification.

Another cauſe of diſquiet is, that men by a natural kinde of Popery ſeek for their comfort too much in ſanctification, neglecting juſtification, relying too much upon their own performances; Saint *Paul* was of another minde, *accounting all but dung and droſſe, compared to the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt.* This is that garment, wherewith being decked we pleaſe our *husband*, and wherein we get the bleſſing. This giveth ſatisfaction to the conſcience, as ſatisfying *God* himſelfe, being performed by *God* the *Son*, and approved therefore by *God* the *Father*; Hereupon the ſoul is quieted, and *Faith* holdeth out this

Philip. 3.

Chap. 3.

this *as a ſhield* againſt the diſpleaſure of God and temptations of Satan: Why did the Apoſtles in their Prefaces joyn *grace* & *peace* together, but that we ſhould ſeek for our *peace* in the free grace and favour of God in Chriſt?

No wonder why Papiſts maintaine doubting, who hold ſalvation by works; becauſe Satan joyning together with our conſciences, will alwaies finde ſome flaw even in our beſt performances; Hereupon the doubting and miſgiving ſoul comes

Pſal. 24. 3. to make this abſurd demand, as *Who ſhall aſcend to heaven?* which is all one as to fetch Chriſt from heaven, and ſo bring him down to ſuffer on the Croſſe again. Whereas if we believe in Chriſt, we are as ſure to come to heaven as Chriſt is there: Chriſt aſcending and deſcending with all that he hath done is ours. So that

Rom. 8. 39. *neither heighth nor depth can ſeparate us from Gods love in Chriſt.*

To have & maintain true comfort, we muſt grow up in holineſſe.

But we muſt remember, though the main pillar of our comfort be in the free forgiveneſſe of our ſins; yet if there be a neglect in growing in holineſſe, the ſoul wil never be ſoundly quiet, becauſe it wil be prone to queſtion the truth of juſtification,

Chap. 3.

8. Want of a clear conſcience raiſes tumults in the ſoul.

cation, and it is as proper for ſin to raiſe doubts and fears in the conſcience, as for rotten fleſh and wood to breed worms. And therefore we may well joyn this as a cauſe of diſquietneſs, *the neglect of keeping a clear conſcience.* Sin, like *Achan*, or *Jonas* in the ſhip, is that which cauſeth ſtorms within and without; where there is not a pure conſcience, there is not a pacified conſcience, and therefore though ſome thinking to ſalve themſelves whole in juſtification, neglect the cleanſing of their natures, and ordering of their lives: yet in time of temptation, they will finde it more troubleſome than they think For a conſcience guilty of many neglects, and of allowing it ſelfe in any ſinne, to lay claim to Gods mercy, is to doe as we ſee Mountebanks ſometimes doe, who wound their fleſh to trie concluſions upon their own bodies, how ſoveraign the ſalve is; yet oftentimes they come to feel the ſmart of their preſumption, by long and deſperate wounds. So God will let us ſee what it is to make wounds to trie the preciouſneſſe of his Balme: ſuch may go mourning to their graves. And though (perhaps) with much wreſtling with God,

Chap. 3.

Pſal. 51.

Gal. 6.16.

Ignorance of our Chriſtian liberty.

Danger of abuſing Chriſtian liberty.

they may get aſſurance of the pardon of their ſins, yet their conſcience will be ſtill trembling (like as *Davids*, though *Nathan* had pronounced unto him the forgiveneſſe of his ſin) till God at length ſpeaks further peace, even as the water of the ſea, (after a ſtorm) is not preſently ſtill, but moves and trembles a good while after the ſtorm is over. A Chriſtian is a new creature, and walketh by rule, and ſo farre as he walketh *according to his rule peace is upon him.* Looſe walkers that regard not their way, muſt think to meet with ſorrows inſtead of peace. Watchfulneſſe is the preſerver of peace. It is a deep ſpiritual judgment to finde peace in an ill way.

Some again, reap the fruit of their *ignorance of Chriſtian liberty*, by unneceſſary ſcruples and doubts. It is both unthankfulneſſe to God, and wrong to our ſelves, to be ignorant of the extent of Chriſtian liberty, *It makes melody to Satan, to ſee Chriſtians troubled with that they neither ſhould or need.* Yet there is danger in ſtretching Chriſtian liberty beyond the bounds. For a man may condemn himſelf in that he approves, as in not walking circum-

Chap. 3.

circumſpectly in regard of circumſtances, and ſo breed his own diſquiet, and give ſcandal to others.

10. Want of imployment.

Sometimes alſo, God ſuffers men to be diſquieted for want of imployment, who in ſhunning labour, procure trouble to themſelves; and by not doing that which is needful,, they are troubled with that which is unneceſſary. *An unimployed life is a burden to it ſelfe.* God is a pure Act, alwaies working, alwaies doing: and the neerer our ſoul comes to God, the more it is an action, and the freer from diſquiet. Men experimentally feel that comfort in doing that which belongs unto them, which before they longed for, and went without; a heart not exerciſed in ſome honeſt labour, works trouble out of it ſelfe.

11. Omiſſion of offices and duties of love.

Again, Omiſſion of duties and offices of love, often troubles the peace of good people; for even in the time of death when they look for peace and deſire it moſt, then looking back upon their former failings, and ſeeing opportunity of doing good wanting to their deſire; (the parties perhaps being deceaſed to whom they owed more reſpect) are hereupon

Chap. 3.

much disquieted, and so much the more, because they see now hope of the like advantages cut off.

A Christian life is full of duties, and the peace of it is not maintained without much fruitfulnesse and looking about us: debt is a disquieting thing to an honest minde, and *duty is debt*. Hereupon the Apostle layeth the charge, *that we should owe nothing to any man but love.*

Rom. 13. 8.

Want of resolution in good things

Again, one special cause of too much disquiet, is, *want of firm resolution in good things*. The Soul cannot but be disquieted when it knows not what to cleave unto, like a ship tossed with contrary windes; Halting is a deformed and troublesome gesture; so halting in Religion, is not only troublesome to others, and odious, but also *disquiets* our selves. *If God be God, cleave to him.* If the duties of Religion be such as will bring peace of conscience at the length, be religious to purpose, practise them in the particular passages of life. We should labour to have a clear judgment, and from thence a resolved purpose; *a wavering* minded man is inconstant in all his waies. God will not speak peace to a staggering spirit that hath alwaies

1 Kings 18. 21.

James 1. 6.

alwaies its religion, and its way to chuſe. Uncertain men are alwaies unquiet men: and giving too much way to paſſion maketh men in particular conſultations unſetled. This is the reaſon why in particular caſes when the matter concerns our ſelves, we cannot judge ſo clearly as in general truths, becauſe Satan raiſeth a miſt between us and the matter in queſtion. Chap. 3.

2 *Poſitive Cauſes*

May be, 1. *When men lay up their comfort too much on outward things*, which being ſubject to much inconſtancy and change, breed diſquiet. Vexation alwaies follows vanity, when vanity is not apprehended to be where it is. In that meaſure we are caſt down in the diſappointing of our hopes, as we were too much lifted up in expectation of good from them. Whence proceed theſe complaints; ſuch a friend hath failed me: I never thought to have fallen into this condition; I had ſetled my joy in this childe, in this friend, &c. but this is to build our comfort upon things that have no firme foundation, to build caſtles in the aire (as we uſe to ſay.) Therefore it is a good

When men lay up too much comfort in outward things

Chap. 3. Prov. 30. desire of the wise man *Agur*, to desire God, *to remove from us vanity and lies*, that is, a vain and a false apprehension pitching upon things that are vain and lying, promising a contentment to our selves from the creature, which it cannot yeeld; confidence in vain things makes a vain heart, the heart becomming of the nature of the thing it relies on: we may say of all earthly things as the Prophet speaketh, *Here is not our rest.*

Mic. 2. 10.

Psal. 39. It is no wonder therefore, that worldly men are oft *cast down* and *disquieted*, when they *walk in a vain shadow*, as likewise that men given much to recreations should be subject to passionate distemper, because here things fall out otherwise then they look't for: recreations being about matters that are variable, which especially falls out in games of hazard, wherein they oft spare not Divine Providence it selfe, but breake out into blasphemy.

Likewise men that grasp more *businesses* than they can discharge, must needs bear both the blame and the griefe of losing or marring many businesses. It being almost impossible to doe many things so

ſo well as to give content to Conſcience; Hence it is that covetous and buſie men trouble both their hearts and their houſes; though ſome men from a largeneſſe of parts, and a ſpecial dexterity in affairs, may turn overmuch; yet the moſt capacious heart hath its meaſure, and when the cup is full, a little drop may cauſe the reſt to ſpill. There is a ſpiritual ſurfeit, when the ſoul is overcharged with buſineſs; it is fit the ſoul ſhould have its meet burthen and no more.

2. Too much relying upon the opinions of others. *Sic leve, ſic parvum eſt, animumquod laudis avarum, ſubruit aut reficit.*

As likewiſe, thoſe that depend too much upon the opinions of other men; A very little matter will refreſh, and then again diſcourage a minde that reſts too much upon the liking of others. Men that ſeek themſelves diſquieted abroad, finde themſelves too much at home; even good men many times are too much troubled with the unjuſt cenſures of other men, ſpecially in the day of their trouble: It was *Jobes* caſe; and it is a heavy thing to have affliction added to affliction: It was *Hannahs* caſe, who being *troubled in ſpirit*, was cenſured by *Eli*, for *diſtemper in brain*; but for vain men who live more to reputation than to conſcience, it

1 Sam. 1. 14.

Chap. 3.

cannot be that they should long enjoy setled quiet, because those in whose good opinion they desire to dwell, are ready often to take up contrary conceits upon slender grounds.

3. Too much looking & poring on evils, in our selves & abroad. Philip. 4.4.

It is also a ground of overmuch trouble, when we look too much and too long upon the ill in our selves and abroad; we may fix our eyes too long even upon sin it self, considering that we have not only a remedy against the hurt by sin, but a commandment *to rejoyce alwaies in the Lord.* Much more may we erre in poring too much upon our afflictions; wherein we may finde alwayes in our selves upon search a cause to justifie God, and alwaies something left to comfort us: Though we naturally minde more one crosse than a hundred favours, dwelling over long upon the sore.

So likewise, our minds may be too much taken up in consideration of the *miseries of the times* at home and abroad, as if Christ did not rule in the midst of his enemies, and would not help all in due time; or as if the condition of the Church in this world, were not for the most part in an afflicted and conflicted condition.

In-

Indeed there is a perfect reſt both for the ſouls and bodies of Gods people, but that is not in this world, but is kept for hereafter, here we are in a ſea, where what can we look for, but ſtorms? Chap. 3.

To inſiſt upon no more, one cauſe is, that we do uſurpe upon God, and take his office upon us, by troubling our ſelves in forecaſting the event of things, whereas our work is only to do our work and be quiet, as children when they pleaſe their parents take no further thought; our trouble is the fruit of our folly in this kinde.

That which we ſhould obſerve from all that hath been ſaid is, that we be not over-haſty in cenſuring others, when we ſee their ſpirits out of temper, for we ſee how many things there are that worke ſtrongly upon the weak nature of man. *We may ſin more by harſh cenſure, than they by overmuch diſtemper:* as in *Jobs* caſe, it was a matter rather of juſt grief and pity, than great wonder or heavie cenſure. *Uſe* 1.

And, for our ſelves: If our eſtate be calme for the preſent, yet we ſhould labour to prepare our hearts, not only for an alteration of eſtate, but of ſpirit, unleſs we *Uſe* 2.

Chap.4. we be marvelous careful before-hand, that our ſpirits fall not down with our Condition. And if it befals us to finde it otherwiſe with our ſouls then at other times, we ſhould ſo farre labour to bear it, as that we doe not judge it our own caſe alone, when we ſee here *David* thus to complain of himſelf, *why art thou caſt down O my ſoul? &c.*

CHAP. IV.

Of caſting down our ſelves, and ſpecially by ſorrow. Evils thereof.

TO return again to the words, *why art thou caſt down O my ſoul? &c.* or, *Why doſt thou caſt down thy ſelf?* or, *art caſt down by thy ſelf?* Whence we may furrher obſerve; *That we are prone to caſt down our ſelves*, we are acceſſary to our own trouble, and weave the web of our own ſorrow, and hamper our ſelves in the cords of our own twining. God neither loves nor wills that we ſhould be too much caſt down. We ſee our Saviour Chriſt how carefull he was that his *Diſciples* ſhould not be troubled, and there-

Obſer. 1.

therefore he labours to prevent that trouble which might ariſe by his ſuffering and departure from them, by a heavenly ſermon; *Let not your hearts be troubled, &c.* He was troubled himſelf, that we ſhould not be troubled: The ground therefore of our diſquiet is chiefly from our ſelves, though Satan will have a hand in it. We ſee many like ſullen birds in a cage, beat themſelves to death. This caſting down of our ſelves, is not from humility, but from Pride, we muſt have our will, or God ſhall not have a good look from us, but as pettiſh and peeviſh children, we hang our heads in our boſome, becauſe our wills are croſt. Chap. 4. Joh. 14. 1.

Therefore in all our troubles we ſhould look firſt home to our own hearts, and ſtop the ſtorm there; for we may thank our own ſelves, not only for our troubles, but likewiſe for overmuch troubling our ſelves in trouble. It was not the troubled condition that ſo diſquieted *Davids* ſoul, for if he had had a quiet minde, it would not have troubled him. But *David* yeelded to the diſcouragements of the fleſh, and the fleſh (ſo far as it is unſubdued) is like the ſea that is alwayes caſting mire and *Uſe.*

Chap. 4.

and dirt of doubts, diſcouragements and murmurings in the ſoul; let us therefore lay the blame where it is to be laid.

Obſer. 2.

Again, we ſee, *it is the nature of ſorrow to caſt down, as of joy to lift up.* Grief is like lead to the ſoul, heavie and cold; it ſinks downwards, and carries the ſoul with it. The poor *Publican* to ſhew that his ſoul was caſt down under the ſight of his ſins, hung down his head, the poſition of his body was ſutable to the diſpoſition of his minde, his heart and head were caſt down alike. And it is Satans practice to go over the hedge where it is loweſt: he adds more weights to the ſoul, by his tentations and vexations. His ſin caſt him out of heaven, and by his temptations, he caſt us out of our Paradiſe, and ever ſince, he labours to caſt us deeper into ſin, wherein his ſcope is, to caſt us either into too much trouble for ſin, or preſumption in ſin, which is but a lifting up, to caſt us down into deep deſpair at length, and ſo at laſt (if Gods mercy ſtop not his malice) he will caſt us as low as himſelf, even into hell it ſelf.

Luk. 18. 13.

Reaſon. How ſorrow doth weaken the ſoul.

The ground hereof is, becauſe *as the joy of the Lord doth ſtrengthen, ſo doth ſorrow*

row weaken the ſoul. How doth it weaken? Chap. 4.

1. By weakning the execution of the functions thereof, becauſe it drinketh up the ſpirits, which are the inſtruments of the ſoule. 1.

2. Becauſe it contracteth, and draweth the ſoul into it ſelfe from communion of that comfort it might have with God or man. And then the ſoul being left alone, if *it falleth*, hath none to *raiſe it up*. 2. Eccl. 4.10.

Uſe. How to prevent caſting down.

Therefore, if we will prevent caſting down, let us *prevent grief the cauſe of it*, & ſin the cauſe of that. Experience proves that true which the wiſe man ſaies, *Heavineſſe in the heart of a man makes it ſtoop, but a good word makes it better.* Pro. 12.25. It bows down the ſoul, and therefore our bleſſed Saviour inviteth ſuch unto him: *Come unto me ye who are heavy laden with the burden of your ſins.* Mat. 11. The body bends under a heavy burden, ſo likewiſe the ſoul hath its burden. *Why art thou caſt down O my ſoul? Why ſo diſquieted? &c.*

Obſer. 1. Whence we ſee 1. that caſting down breeds diſquieting: Becauſe it ſprings from pride, which is a turbulent Paſſion, when as men cannot ſtoop to that condition which God would have them in; *Reaſon.* this

Chap. 4.

this proceeds from discontentment, and that from pride. As we see, a vapour incloſed in a cloud cauſeth a terrible noiſe of thunder, whilſt it is pent up there, and ſeeketh a vent; So all the noiſe within proceeds from a diſcontented ſwelling vapour. It is aire incloſed in the bowels of the earth which ſhakes it, which all the foure windes cannot do.

No creature under heaven ſo low caſt down as Satan, none more lifted up in pride, none ſo full of diſcord; the impureſt ſpirits are the moſt diſquiet and ſtormy ſpirits, troubleſome to themſelves and others; for when the ſoul leaves God once, and looks downwards, what is there to ſtay it from diſquiet? Remove the needle from the pole ſtarre, and it is alwaies ſtirring and trembling, never quiet till it be right again. So diſplace the ſoul by taking it from God, and it will never be quiet. The Devill caſt out of heaven and out of the Church, keeps adoe, ſo do unruly ſpirits led by him.

Remedies againſt caſting down and diſquieting.

Now I come to the remedies,

1. *By expoſtulation with himſelf.*
2. *By laying a charge upon himſelfe: (Truſt in God)*

It

Chap. 4.

It is ſuppoſed here, that there is no reaſon (which the wiſdome from above allowes to be a reaſon) why men ſhould be diſcouraged, although the wiſdome from beneath which takes part with our corruption, will ſeldome want a plea. Nay there is not onely no reaſon for it, but there are ſtrong reaſons againſt it, there being a world of evil in it.

Reaſons againſt diſcouragement.

For, 1. It indiſpoſes a man to all good duties, it makes him like an inſtrument out of tune, and like a body out of joynt, that moveth both uncomely and painfully. It unfits to duties to God, who loves a *cheerful giver*, and eſpecially a *thanksgiver*. Whereupon the Apoſtle joyns them both together, *In all things be thankfull*, and *rejoyce evermore*. In our communion with God in the Sacraments, joy is a chief ingredient. So in duties to men, if the ſpirit be dejected, they are unwelcome, and loſe the greateſt part of their life and grace; A cheerfull and a free ſpirit in duty is that which is moſt accepted in duty. We obſerve not ſo much what, as from what affection a thing is done.

1. It indiſpoſes to all good duties.

1 Theſſ. 5.

* 2. It is a great wrong to God himſelf, and

* 2. It wrongs God, making us think amiſs of him.

Chap. 4.

and it makes us conceive black thoughts of him, as if He were an enemy. What an injury is it to a gracious father, that such whom he hath followed with many gracious evidences of his favour and love, should be in so ill a frame, as once to call it into question?

3. It makes a man forget former blessings, &c.

3. So, it makes a man forgetful of all former blessings, and stops the influence of Gods grace, for the time present, and for that to come.

4. It makes us unfit to receive good. Jam. 1.21.

4. So again, For receiving of good: It makes us unfit to receive mercies; a quiet soul is the seat of wisdome. Therefore, *meekness* is required for the *receiving of that engraffed word which is able to save our souls.* Till the spirit of God *meekens* the soul, (say what you will) it mindes nothing, the soul is not empty and quiet enough to receive the seed of the Word. It is ill sowing in a storm, so a stormy spirit will not suffer the Word to take place. *Men are deceived when they think a dejected spirit to be an humbled spirit.* Indeed it is so when we are cast down in the sense of our own unworthinesse, and then as much raised up in the confidence of Gods mercy. But when we cast our selves down

down ſullenly, and neglect our comforts, or undervalue them, it proceeds from pride, for it controuls (as much as in us lies) the wiſedome and juſtice of God, when we think with our ſelves, why ſhould it be ſo with us? as if we were wiſer to diſpoſe of our ſelves then God is. It diſpoſeth us for entertaining any temptation. Satan hath never more advantage then upon diſcontent, Chap. 4.

5. Beſides, it keeps off beginners from coming in, and entring into the waies of God, bringing an ill report upon religion, cauſing men to charge it falſly for an uncomfortable way, when as men never feel what true comfort meaneth, till they give up themſelves to God. And it damps likewiſe the ſpirits of thoſe that walk the ſame way with us, when as we ſhould (as good Travellers) cheer up one another both by word and example. In ſuch a caſe, the wheels of the ſoul are taken off, or elſe (as it were) want oyle, whereby the ſoul paſſeth on very heavily, and no good action comes off from it as it ſhould, which breeds not only uncomfortableneſſe but unſetledneſſe in good courſes. For a man will never goe on

5. It hinders beginners coming into Gods waies

Chap. 4. comfortably and constantly in that which he heavily undertakes. That's the reason why uncheerfull spirits seldome hold out as they should. S. *Peter* knew this well, and therfore he willeth that there should
1 Pet. 3. be *quietnesse and peace betwixt husband and wife, that their prayers be not hindred*; insinuating that their prayers are hindred by family-breaches. For by that means, those two (that should be one flesh and spirit) are divided, and so made two, and when they should mind duty, their mind is taken up with wrongs done by the one to the other.

There is nothing more required for the performing of holy duties then uniting of
Mat. 5. 24. spirits; & therefore God would not have the sacrifice brought to the Altar, before reconciliation with our brother. He esteems peace so highly, that he will have his own service stay for it. We see when
Exod. 9. *Moses* came to deliver the *Israelites out of bondage*, their mind was so taken up with their grief, that there was no body within to give *Moses* an answer, their souls went altogether after their ill usage.

Use. Therefore we should all endeavour and labour for a calmed spirit, that we may the

the better ſerve God in praying to him, and praiſing of him; and ſerve one another in love, that we may be fitted to do and receive good: that we may make our paſſage to heaven more eaſie and cheerfull, without drooping and hanging the wing. So much as we are quiet and cheerfull upon good grounds, ſo much we live, and are as it were in heaven. So much as we yeeld to diſcouragement, we loſe ſo much of our life and happineſſe, cheerfulneſſe being (as it were) that life of our lives, and the ſpirit of our ſpirits, by which they are more enlarged to receive happineſſe and to expreſſe it. Chap. 5.

CHAP. V.

Remedies of caſting down: To cite the ſoul, and preſſe it to give an account.

BUt to come to ſome helps:

Firſt, In that he expoſtulates with himſelf, we may obſerve, that *One way to raiſe a dejected ſoule, is, to cite it before it ſelf, and as it were to reaſon the caſe.* God hath ſet up a court in mans heart, wherein the Conſcience hath the office, both *Obſer.* 1.

Chap. 5. The court of Conscience in man.

of *Informer*, *Accuser*, *Witnesse*, and *Judge*; And if matters were well carried within our selves, this prejudging would be a prevention of future judging. It is a great mercy of God, that the credit and comfort of man are so provided for, that he may take up matters in himself, and so prevent publike disgrace. But if there be not a fair dispatch and transaction in this inferiour court within us, there will be a review in a higher court. Therby by slubbering over our matters, we put God and our selves to more trouble then needs. For a judgement must passe first or last, either within us or without us, upon all unwarrantable distempers. We must not only be ready to give an account of our *faith*, upon what Grounds we believe; but of all our *actions*, upon what grounds we do what we doe; and of our *passions*, upon what ground we are passionate: as in a well governed State, uprore and sedition is never stirred, but account must be given. Now in a mutiny, the presence and speech of a venerable man, composeth the mindes of the disordered multitude; so likewise in a mutiny of the Spirit, the authority that God hath put into Reason

Judgement must passe first or last, without or within, upon us.

(as

(as a beam of himſelf) commands ſilence, and puts all in order again. Chap. 5.

Reaſon.

And there is good reaſon for it, for man is an underſtanding creature, and hath a rule given him to live by, and therfore is to be countable of every *thought, word, action, paſſion.* Therefore the firſt way to quiet the ſoule, is, to ask a reaſon of the tumult raiſed, and then many of our diſtempers for ſhame will not appear, becauſe (though they rage in ſilent darkneſſe) yet they can ſay nothing for themſelves, being ſummoned before ſtrength of Judgement and Reaſon. Which is the reaſon why paſſionate men are loth that any Court ſhould be kept within them; but labour to ſtop judgement all they can. If men would but give themſelves leave to conſider better of it, they would never yeeld to ſuch unreaſonable motions of the ſoul: If they could but gain ſo much of their unruly paſſions, as to reaſon the matter within themſelves, to hear what their Conſciences can tell them in ſecret, there would not be ſuch offenſive breakings out. And therefore, if we be aſhamed to hear others upbraiding us, let us for ſhame hear our ſelves; And if no reaſon

Diſtempers fall down when they are arrhigned before Reaſon.

Want of conſideration raiſes and maintains our diſtempers.

In diſcouragement we croſſe our own rinciples.

Chap. 5.

ſon can be given, what an unreaſonable thing is it for a man endowed with reaſon to contrary his own principles? and to be carried as a beaſt without reaſon; or if there be any reaſon to be given, then this is the way to ſcan it, ſee whether it will hold water or not. We ſhall finde ſome reaſons (if they may be ſo called) to be ſo corrupt and foul, that (if the judgement be not corrupted by them) they dare not be brought to light, but alwaies appear under ſome colour and pretext, for ſin (like the devil) is afraid to appear in its own likeneſs, & men ſeek out fair gloſſes, for foul intentions. The hidden ſecret reaſon is one, the open is another: the heart being corrupt, ſets the wit a work, to ſatisfie corrupt will; ſuch kinde of men are afraid of their own conſciences (as *Ahab* of *Michaiah*) becauſe they fear it would deal truly with them: and therefore they take either preſent order for their conſciences, or elſe (as *Felix* put off *Paul*) they adjourn the court for another time. Such men are ſtrangers at home, afraid of nothing more than themſelves, and therefore in a fearfull condition, becauſe they are reſerved for the *judgement of the great day*,

Corruption of the heart ſets the wit on work

1 Kin. 22.

Act. 24.25.

day, if God doth not before that ſet upon them in this world. If men carried away with their own luſts, would give but a little check, and ſtop themſelves in their poſting to hell, and ask, *What have I done? What am I now about? Whither will this courſe tend? How will it end?* &c. Undoubtedly men would begin to be wiſe. Would the blaſphemer give away his ſoul for nothing (for there is no engagement of profit or pleaſure in this, as in other ſins, but it iſſues meerly out of irreverence, & a ſuperfluity of prophaneneſſe;) would he (I ſay) draw ſo heavy a guilt upon himſelf for nothing, if he would but make uſe of his reaſon? would an old man (when he is very neare his journeys end) make longer proviſion for a ſhort way, if he would ask himſelf a Reaſon? But indeed Covetouſneſs is an unreaſonable vice.

Chap. 5.

The ſouls expoſtulation.

Blaſpheming, whence.

If thoſe alſo of the *younger ſort* would ask of themſelves, *Why God ſhould not have the flower and marrow of their age? and why they ſhould give their ſtrength to the Devil?* It might a little take them off from the Devils ſervice. But ſin is a work of darkneſſe, and therefore ſhuns not only

A leſſon for young men,

Chap. 5. Sin is unreasonable so much the more, as without reason. it pretends reasons.

the light of grace, but even the light of reason. Yet sin seldome wants a seeming reason, *Men will not go to hell without a shew of reason.* But such be sophisticall fallacies, not reasons; and therefore sinners are said to play the sophisters with themselves: *Satan could not deceive us, unlesse we deceived our selves first, and are willingly deceived*: Willfull sinners are blinde, because they put out the light of reason, and so think God (like themselves) blinde too; and therefore they are deservedly termed *mad men and fools*; for, did they but make use of that spark of reason, it would teach them to reason thus; *I cannot give an account of my waies to my self: what account shall I, or can I give then, to the Judge of all flesh ere it be long?*

Psal. 50.

And as it is a ground of repentance, in stopping our course to ask, *What have I done?* So likewise of faith and new obedience, to ask, *what shall I do for the time to come?* and then upon setling, the soule in way of thanks, will be ready to ask of it self, *What shall I return to the Lord? &c.* So that the Soul by this dealing with it self, promoteth it self to all holy duties till it come to heaven.

The

Chap. 5.

Reaſ. 1. Why we are ſo backward to keep court in our ſelves.

The reaſon why we are thus backward to the keeping of this court in our ſelves, is *ſelf-love*; we love to flatter our own affections, *but this ſelf-love is but ſelf-hatred in the end*; (as the Wiſeman ſaies) he that regards not this part of wiſedom, *hates his own ſoul, and ſhall eat the fruits of his own waies.*

2. Irkſomneſs of labour.

2. As likewiſe it iſſues from an irkſomeneſſe of labour, which makes us rather willing to ſeem baſe and vile to our ſelves and others, then to take pains with our own hearts to be better, as thoſe that are weary of holding the reins give them up unto the horſe neck, and ſo are driven whither the rage of the Horſe carrieth them: *ſparing a little trouble at firſt, doubles it in the end*; as he who will not take the pains to caſt up his books, his books will caſt up him in the end. *It is a bleſſed trouble that brings ſound and long peace*: This labour ſaves God a labour, for therefore he *judgeth us*, becauſe we would not take pains with our ſelves before. 1 Cor. 11. 31

3. Pride.

3. And *pride* alſo, with a deſire of liberty, makes men think it to be a diminiſhing of greatneſſe and freedome, either to be curbed, or to curbe our ſelves: We love

Chap. 5.

love to be absolute and independent; but this, as it brought ruine upon our nature in *Adam*; so it will upon our persons. Men (as *Luther* was wont to say) are born with a Pope in their belly, they are loth to give an account, although it be to themselves, their wils are in stead of a Kingdome to them.

Mens mihi pro regno.

Let us therefore (when any lawlesse passions begin to stir) deal with our souls as God did with *Jonah*, *Doest thou well to be angry?* to fret thus? this will be a means to make us quiet. For alas, what weak reasons have we often of strong motions; such a man gave me no respect, such another lookt more kindly upon another man than upon me, &c. You have some of *Hamans* spirit, that for a little neglect would ruine a whole nation. Passion presents men that are innocent as guilty to us, and becaus we will not seem to be mad without reason, *pride* commands the wit to justifie anger, and so one Passion maintains and feeds another.

Jonah 4.

Esther 5. *Facit ira nocentes.*

Obser. 2. Neither is it sufficient to *cite the soul before it self*; *but it must be pressed to give an account*, as we see here, *David* doubles, and trebles the expostulation; as oft as any

Chap. 5.

any diſtemper did ariſe, ſo oft did he labour to keep it down. If paſſions grow too inſolent, *Elies* mildeneſſe will do no good. It would prevent much trouble in this kind, to ſubdue betimes (in our ſelves and others) the firſt beginnings of any unruly paſſions and affections; which (if they be not well tutor'd and diſciplin'd at the firſt) prove as headſtrong, unruly, and ill nurtured children, who (being not chaſtened in time) take ſuch a head, that it is (oft) above the power of parents to bring them in order. A childe ſet at liberty (ſaith *Solomon*) *breeds ſhame (at length) to his parents.* *Adonia's* example ſhews this. The like may be ſaid of the affections ſet at liberty; It is dangerous to redeem a little quiet by yeelding to our affections, which is never ſafely gotten but by mortification of them.

1 Sam. 2. 24

Pro. 29. 15.

Thoſe that are in great place, are moſt in danger, by yeelding to themſelves, to loſe themſelves; for they are ſo taken up with the perſon for a time put upon them, that they, both in look, and ſpeech, and carriage, often ſhew that they forget both their naturall condition as men and much more their ſupernaturall as Chriſtians; and

Chap. 5. and therefore are ſcarce counſellable by others or themſelves, in thoſe things that concern their ſevered condition that concerneth another world. Whereas it were moſt wiſedom ſo to think of their place they bear, whereby they are called *gods*, as not to forget they muſt lay their perſon aſide, and *die like men*: *David* himſelf that in his afflicted condition could adviſe with himſelf, and check himſelf, yet in his free and flouriſhing eſtate neglected the counſell of his friends. *Agur* was in jealouſie of a full condition, and leſt in ſtead of ſaying, What have I done? why am I thus caſt down? *&c.* he ſhould ſay, *Who is the Lord?*

Pſa. 82.6,7.

2 Sam. 24.4

Pro. 30.9.

Meaner men in their leſſer ſphere, often ſhew what their ſpirits would be, if their compaſſe were enlarged.

It is a great fault in breeding youth, for fear of taking down of their ſpirits, not to take down their pride, and get victory of their affections; whereas a proud unbroken heart raiſeth us more trouble often than all the world beſide. Of all troubles, the trouble of a proud heart is the greateſt; It was a great trouble to *Haman* to leade *Mordecais horſe*, which another

Eſth. 6.1.

another man would not have thought ſo; the moving of a ſtraw is troubleſome to proud fleſh. And therefore it is good to *bear the yoke from our youth*; It is better to be taken down in youth, then to be broken in pieces by great croſſes in age. Firſt or laſt, ſelf-deniall and victory over our ſelves is abſolutely neceſſary; otherwiſe *faith* which is a grace that requireth ſelf-deniall, will never be brought into the ſoul, and bear rule there.

Chap. 5.

Lam. 3. 27.

But, *what if preſſing upon our ſouls will not help?*

Queſt.

Then ſpeak to God, to Jeſus Chriſt by prayer, that as he rebuked the windes and the waves, and went upon the Sea, ſo he would walk upon our ſouls, and command a calm there. It is no leſſe power to ſettle a peace in the ſoul, than to command the ſeas to be quiet. It is Gods prerogative to rule in the heart, as likewiſe to give it up to it ſelf, which (next to hell) is the greateſt judgement; which ſhould draw us to the greater reverence and fear of diſpleaſing God. It was no ill wiſh of him, that deſired God to free him from an ill man, himſelf.

Anſw.

Domine, libera me à malo homine, meipſo.

CHAP.

Chap. 6.

CHAP. VI.

Other Obſervations of the ſame nature.

Obſer. 3. MOreover we ſee that a *godly man can caſt a reſtraint upon himſelf*, as *David* here ſtaies himſelf in falling. There is a principle of grace, that ſtops the heart, and pulls in the reins again when the affections are looſe. A carnall man, when he begins to be caſt down, ſinks lower and lower, until he ſinks into deſpair, as lead ſinks into the bottome of the ſea.

Exod. 15. 5 *They ſunk, they ſunk, like lead in the mighty waters.* A carnall man ſinks as a heavy body to the center of the earth, and ſtaies not, if it be not ſtopped: There is nothing in him to ſtay him in falling, as we ſee in

2 Sam. 17. 23. *Achitophel* and *Saul*: who (wanting a ſupport) found no other ſtay, but the ſwords point. And the greater their parts and places are, the more they entangle themſelves; and no wonder, for they are to encounter with God and his deputy *Conſcience*, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. When *Cain* was caſt out of his fathers houſe, his heart and countenance was alwaies caſt down; for he had

had nothing in him to lift it upwards. But a godly man, though he may give a little way to paſſion, yet (as *David*) he recovers himſelf. Therefore as we would have any good evidence, that we have a better ſpirit in us then our own, greater then the fleſh or the world, let us (in all troubles we meet with) gather up our ſelves, that the ſtream of our own affections carry us not away too far. Chap. 6.

There is an art or skill of bearing troubles (if we could learn it) without overmuch troubling of our ſelves; As in bearing of a burthen there is a way ſo to poize it, that it weigheth not over heavy: If it hangs all on one ſide, it poizes the body down. The greater part of our troubles we pull upon our ſelves, by not parting our care ſo, as to take upon us only the care of duty, and leave the reſt to God; and by mingling our paſſions with our croſſes; and (like a fooliſh patient) chewing the pils which we ſhould ſwallow down. We dwell too much upon the grief, when we ſhould remove the ſoul higher. We are neareſt neighbours unto our ſelves; when we ſuffer grief (like a canker) to eat into the ſoul, and (like a fire

There is an art of bearing troubles.

Chap. 6.

fire in the bones) to consume the marrow and drink up the spirits, we are accessary to the wrong done both to our bodies and souls: we waste our own candle, and put out our light.

Obs. 4.

We see here again, that *a godly man can make a good use of Privacy.* When he is forced to be alone, he can talk with his God and himself; one reason whereof is, that his heart is a treasury and storehouse of divine truths, whence he can speak to himself, by way of check, or encouragement of himself: he hath a spirit over his own spirit, to teach him to make use of that store he hath laid up in his heart, the spirit is never nearer him then when by way of witnesse to his spirit he is thus comforted; wherein the childe of God differs from another man, who cannot endure solitarinesse, because his heart is empty; he was a stranger to God before, and God is a stranger to him now; So that he cannot go to God as a friend. And for his conscience, that is ready to speak to him, that which he is loth to hear: and therefore he counts himself a torment to himself, especially in privacy.

The cause why wicked men cannot endure solitarinesse.

We

We reade of great Princes who after ſome bloody deſignes, were as terrible to themſelves as they were formerly to others, and therefore could never endure to be awaked in the night, without Muſick, or ſome like diverſion. It may be, we may be caſt into ſuch a condition, (where we have none in the world to comfort us) as in contagious ſickneſſe, when none may come near us, we may be in ſuch an eſtate wherein no friend will own us. And therefore let us labour now to be acquainted with God and our own hearts, and acquaint our hearts with the comforts of the holy Ghoſt; then though we have not ſo much as a book to look on, or a friend to talk with, yet we may look with comfort into the book of our own heart, and reade what God hath written there by the finger of his Spirit: all books are written to amend this one book of our heart and conſcience: by this means we ſhall never want a Divine to comfort us, a Phyſician to cure us, a Counſeller to direct us, a Muſician to chear us, a Controller to check us, becauſe (by help of the Word and Spirit) we can be all theſe to our ſelves.

Chap. 6. As *Charls* the IX after the Maſſacre in *France*. *Thuanus, li. 57. Somnum poſt caſum Sanbartholomæum nocturni horrores plerumq; interrumpebant & rurſus adhibiti ſymphoniaci expergefactò conciliabant.*

Ideo ſcribuntur omnes libri ut emendetur unus.

Chap. 6. *Obser.* 5. Another thing we see here, that God hath made every man a Governour over himself. The poor man that hath none to govern, yet may he be a King in himself. It is the naturall ambition of mans heart to desire government, as we see in the *Bramble*; Judg. 9. Well then, let us make use of this disposition, to rule our selves. *Absalom* had high thoughts; O, If I were a King, I would do so and so! So our hearts are ready to promise, If I were as such and such a man, in such and such a place, I would do this and that.

But how dost thou manage thine own affections? how dost thou rule in thine house? in thy self? do not passions get the upper hand, and keep reason under foot? When we have learned to rule over our own spirits well, then we may be fit to rule over others. Mat. 25. 21. *He that is faithfull in a little, shall be set over more.* Pro. 16. 32. *He that can govern himself* (in the Wisemans judgement) *is better than he that can govern a City.* He that cannot, *is like a City without a wall*, where those that are in may go out, and the enemies without, may come in at their pleasure. So where there is not a government set up, there sin

ſin breaks out, and Satan breaks in without controul. Chap. 6.

See again, the *excellency of the ſoul, that can reflect upon it ſelf, and judge of whatſoever comes from it:* A godly mans care and trouble is eſpecially about his ſoul, as *David* here looks principally to that, becauſe all outward troubles are for to help that; when God touches our bodies, our eſtates, or our friends, he aims at the ſoul in all. God will never remove his hand, till ſomething be wrought upon the ſoul, as *Davids moiſture was as the drought in Summer*, ſo that he roared, and carried himſelf unſeemly (for ſo great and holy a man) till his heart was ſubdued to deal without all guile with God in confeſſing his ſinne, and then God forgave him the iniquity thereof, and healed his body too. In ſickneſſe, or in any other trouble, it is beſt the Divine ſhould be before the Phyſician: and that men begin where God begins. In great fires men look firſt to their Jewels, and then to their lumber; ſo our ſoul is our beſt Jewell: A carnall worldly man, is called (and well called) a fleſhly man, becauſe his very ſoul is fleſh, and there is nothing but

Obſer. 6.

All outward troubles are for to help the ſoul.

Pſal. 32.

Chap. 6.

the world in him. And therefore, when all is not well within, he cries out, My *Body* is troubled, my *ſtate* is broken, my friends fail me, *&c.* but all this while, there is no care for the poor ſoul to ſettle a peace in that.

The poſſeſſion of the ſoul is the richeſt poſſeſſion, no jewell ſo precious; the account for our own ſouls, and the ſouls of others, is the greateſt account, and therefore the care of ſouls ſhould be the greateſt care: What an indignity is it that we ſhould forget ſuch ſouls to ſatisfie our luſts? to have our wills? to be vexed with any; who by their judgement, example, or authority ſtop as we ſuppoſe our courſes? Is it not the greateſt plot of the world; Firſt. to have their luſts ſatisfied: Secondly, to remove either by fraud or violence whatſoever ſtandeth in their way: And thirdly, to put colours and pretences upon this to delude the world and themſelves, imploying all their carnall wit and worldly ſtrength for their carnall aims, and fighting for that which fights againſt their own ſouls? For what will be the iſſue of this but certain deſtruction?

Of

Chap. 6.

Of this minde are not only the dregs of people, but many of the more refined ſort, who deſire to be eminent in the world; And to have their own deſires herein, give up the liberty of their own judgements and conſciences, to the deſires and luſts of others; *to be above others they will be beneath themſelves*, having thoſe mens perſons in admiration for hope of advantage, whom otherwiſe they deſpiſe, and ſo ſubſtituting in their ſpirits, man in the place of God, loſe heaven for earth, & bury that divine ſpark (their ſouls) capable of the Divine nature, and fitter to be a ſanctuary and Temple for God to dwell in, than by cloſing with baſer things to become baſe it ſelf. We need not wonder that others ſeem baſe to carnal men, who are baſe both in and to themſelves. It is no wonder they ſhould be cruell to the ſouls of others, who are cruell to their own ſouls; that they ſhould neglect and ſtarve others, that give away their own ſouls in a manner for nothing. Alas! upon what poor terms doe they hazard that, the nature and worth whereof is beyond mans reach to comprehend! Many are ſo careleſſe in this kinde, that if they

Chap. 6.

were throughly perſwaded that they had ſouls that ſhould live for ever (either in bliſſe or torment) we might the more eaſily work upon them. But as they live by ſenſe, as beaſts, ſo they have no more thoughts of future times than beaſts, except at ſuch times as conſcience is awaked by ſome ſudden judgement, whereby Gods wrath is revealed from heaven againſt them. But happy were it for them, if they might die like beaſts, whoſe miſery dies with them.

To ſuch an eſtate hath ſin brought the ſoul, that it willingly drowneth it ſelf in the ſenſes, and becomes in ſome ſort incarnate with the fleſh.

We ſhould therefore ſet our ſelves to have moſt care of that, which God cares moſt for: wch he breathed into us at firſt, ſet his own image upon, gave ſo great a price for, and values above all the world beſides. Shall all our ſtudy be to ſatisfie the deſires of the fleſh, and neglect this?

Is it not a vanity to preferre the caſket before the Jewell, the ſhell before the pearl, the gilded potſheard before the treaſure? and is it not much more vanity, to preferre the outward condition before the

the inward? The ſoul is that which Satan and his hath moſt ſpite at, for in troubling our bodies or eſtates, he aims at the vexation of our ſouls. As in *Job*, his aim was to abuſe that power God had given him over his children, body and goods, to make him out of a diſquieted ſpirit blaſpheme God. It is an ill method to begin our care in other things, and neglect the ſoul, as *Achitophel*, who ſet his houſe in order, when he ſhould have ſet his ſoul in order firſt. Wiſedom begins at the right end. If all be well at home, it comforts a man, though he meets with troubles abroad. Oh (ſaith he) I ſhall have reſt at home, I have a loving wife and dutifull Children; ſo whatſoever we meet withall abroad, if the ſoul be quiet, thither we can retire with comfort. See that all be well within, and then all troubles from without cannot much annoy us.

Chap. 6.

Job 1.

2 Sam. 17. 23. We ſhould ſet the ſoul firſt in order.

Grace will teach us to reaſon thus, God hath given mine enemies power over my liberty and condition, but ſhall they have power and liberty over my ſpirit? It is that which Satan and they moſt ſeek for: but never yeeld, O my ſoul! And thus

Chap. 6.

a Godly man will become more than a conquerer; when in appearance he is conquered, the cauſe prevails, his ſpirit prevails, and is undaunted. A Chriſtian is not ſubdued till his ſpirit be ſubdued. Thus *Job* prevailed over Satan and all his troubles at length. This tormenteth proud perſons to ſee godly men enjoy a calme and reſolute frame of minde in the midſt of troubles; when their enemies are more troubled in troubling them, than they are in being troubled by them.

Obſer. 7. We ſee likewiſe here, *how to frame our complaints*: *David* complains not of God, nor of his troubles, nor of others, but of his own Soul: He complains of himſelf to himſelf; As if he ſhould ſay, *Though all things elſe be out of order, yet O my Soul thou ſhouldſt not trouble me too: thou ſhouldſt not betray thy ſelf unto troubles, but rule over them.* A Godly man complains to God, but not of God, but of himſelf; a carnall man is ready to juſtifie himſelf, and complain of God. He complains not to God, but of God, (at the leaſt) in ſecret murmuring, he complains of others that are but Gods vials; he complains of the grievance that

that lies upon him, but never regards what is amiſſe in himſelf within: Openly he cries out upon Fortune, yet ſecretly he ſtriketh at God, under that Idoll of Fortune, by whoſe guidance all things come to paſſe; whileſt he quarrels with that which is nothing; he wounds him that is the cauſe of all things: like a gouty man that complains of his ſhoe, and of his bed; or an aguiſh man of his drink, when the cauſe is from within. So men are diſquieted with others, when they ſhould rather be diſquieted and angry with their own hearts. Chap. 6.

We condemn *Jonas* for contending with God, and juſtifying his unjuſt anger, but yet the ſame riſings are in men naturally, if ſhame would ſuffer them to give vent to their ſecret diſcontent; their heart ſpeaks what *Jonas* tongue ſpake. Oh, but here we ſhould lay our hand upon our mouth, and adore God, and command ſilence to our ſouls.

No man is hurt but by himſelf firſt; We are drawn to evill, and allured from a true good to a falſe by our own luſts, *God tempts no man.* Satan hath no power over us further then we willingly lie open to Jam. 1. 13.

Chap. 6.

to him; Satan works upon our affections, and then our affections work upon our will. He doth not work immediatly upon the will; we may thank our ſelves in willingly yeelding to our own paſſions, for all that ill *Satan* or his inſtruments

1 Sam. 16. draws us unto; *Saul* was not vexed with an *evill ſpirit*, till he gave way to his own

Mat. 27. 3. *evil ſpirit of envy* firſt. The Devil entred not into *Judas*, until his covetous heart made way for him. The Apoſtle ſtrengthneth his conceit againſt raſh and laſting anger from hence, that by this we

Eph. 4. give way to the Devil. It is a dangerous thing to paſſe from Gods Government, and come under Satans.

Satan mingleth himſelf with our own paſſions, therefore we ſhould blame our ſelves firſt, be aſhamed of our ſelves moſt, and judge our ſelves moſt ſeverely. But ſelf-love teacheth us the contrary method, to tranſlate all upon others; it robs us of a right judgement of our ſelves. Though we deſire to know all diſeaſes of the body by their proper names, yet we will conceive of ſinfull paſſions of the ſoul under milder terms; as *luſt* under *love*, *rage* under *juſt anger*, *murmuring* under

under *juſt diſpleaſure*, &c. thus whileſt we flatter our grief, what hope of cure! Thus ſin hath not only made all the creatures enemies to us, but our ſelves the greateſt enemies to our ſelves, and therefore we ſhould begin our complaints againſt our ſelves, and diſcuſſe our ſelves throughly; how elſe ſhall we judge truly of other things without vs, above us, or beneath us? The Sun when it riſes enlightens firſt the neareſt places, and then the more remote; So where true light is ſet up, it diſcovers what is amiſſe within firſt. Chap. 6.

Hence alſo we ſee, that *as in all diſcouragements a godly man hath moſt trouble with his own heart, ſo he knows how to carry himſelf therein*, as *David* doth here. *Obſer.* 8.

For the better clearing of this, we muſt know there be divers kindes and degrees of conflicts in the ſoul of man, whilſt it is united to the body.

First, between one corrupt *Paſſion* and another, as between *Covetouſneſſe* and *Pride*; Pride cals for expence, Covetouſneſſe for reſtraint; oft *Paſſions* fight not onely againſt God and reaſon, to which they owe a homage, but one againſt another; Sin fights againſt ſin, and a leſſer ſin 1.

is

Chap. 6.

is oftentimes overcome by a greater. The ſoul in this caſe is like the Sea toſſed with contrary windes; and like a Kingdome divided, wherein the Subjects fight both againſt their Prince, and one againſt another.

2. Secondly, There is a natural conflict in the *Affections*, whereby *Nature* ſeeks to preſerve it ſelf, as betwixt anger and fear; *Anger* cals for revenge, *Fear* of the Law bindes the ſoul to be quiet. We ſee in the creatures, *fear* makes them abſtain from that which their appetites carry them unto. A *Wolfe* comes to a Flock with an eagerneſſe to prey upon it, but ſeeing the *Shepherd* ſtanding in defence of his Sheep, returns and doth no harm, and yet for all this, as he came a wolf, ſo he returns a wolf.

A naturall man may oppoſe ſome ſin from an obſtinate reſolution againſt it, not from any love of God, or hatred of ſin, as ſin, but becauſe he conceives it a brave thing to have his will. As one hard weapon may ſtrike at another, as a ſtone-wall may beat back an arrow; but this oppoſition is not from a contrariety of nature, as is betwixt fire and water.

Thirdly,

Chap. 6.

3.

Thirdly, There is a conflict of a higher nature, as between ſome *ſins* and the light of reaſon helped by a natural conſcience. The *Heathen* could reaſon from the dignity of the ſoul, to count it a baſe thing to proſtitute themſelves to beaſtly luſts, ſo as it were degrading and unmanning themſelves. Natural men deſirous to maintain a great opinion of themſelves, and to awe the inferiour ſort by gravity of deportment in carriage, will abſtain from that, which otherwiſe their hearts carry them unto, leſt yeelding ſhould render them deſpiſed, by laying themſelves too much open; as becauſe paſſion diſcovers a fool as he is, and makes a wiſe man thought meaner than he is; therefore a prudent man will conceal his paſſion. Reaſon refined and raiſed by education, example, and cuſtome, doth break in ſome degree the force of naturall corruption, and brings into the ſoul, as it were, another nature, and yet no true change; as we ſee in ſuch as have been inured to good courſes, they feel conſcience checking them upon the firſt diſcontinuance and alteration of their former good waies, but this is uſually from a former

Major ſum, & ad majora natus, quamvis corporis mei ſim mancipium, Senec.

Chap. 6.

former impreſſion of their breeding, as the boat moves ſome little time upon the water by vertue of the former ſtroak, yet at length we ſee corruption prevailing over education, as in *Joas*, who was awed by the reverent reſpect he bare to his Uncle *Jehoiada*, he was good *all his uncles daies*: And in *Nero*, in whom the goodneſſe of his *education* prevailed over the fierceneſſe of his *nature*, for the firſt five years.

2 Kin. 12. 2.

4. Fourthly, but in the Church, where there ſhineth a light above nature, as there is a diſcovery of more ſinnes, and ſome ſtrength, with the light, to perform more duty; So there is a further conflict than in a man that hath no better than *nature* in him. By a diſcovery of the excellent things of the *Goſpel*, there may be ſome kinde of joy ſtirred up, and ſome degree of obedience: whence there may be ſome degree of reſiſtance againſt the ſins of the *Goſpel*, as obſtinate unbelief, deſperation, prophaneneſſe, *&c.* A man in the Church may doe more than another out of the Church, by reaſon of the enlargement of his knowledge; whereupon ſuch cannot ſin at ſo eaſie a rate as others that know leſſe,

leſſe, and (therefore) meet with leſſe oppoſition from conſcience. Chap. 6.

Fifthly, there is yet a further degree of conflict betwixt the ſanctified powers of the ſoul, and the fleſh, not only as it is ſeated in the baſer parts, but even in the beſt faculties of the ſoul, and as it mingles it ſelf with every gracious performance: (as in *David*) There is not only a conflict betwixt ſin and conſcience, inlightned by a *common work* of the *Spirit*; but between the commanding powers of the ſoul *ſanctified*, and it ſelf *unſanctified*, between reaſons of the *fleſh* and reaſons of the *ſpirit*, between *faith* and *diſtruſt*, between the true light of knowledge, and falſe light. For it is no queſtion but the fleſh would play its part in *David*, and muſter up all the ſtrength of reaſon it had. And uſually *fleſh*, as it is more ancient than the *ſpirit* (we being firſt naturall, then ſpirituall) ſo it will put it ſelf firſt forward in deviſing ſhifts, as *Eſau* comes out of the womb firſt before *Jacob*; yet hereby the *ſpirit* is ſtirred up to a preſent examination and reſiſtance, and in reſiſting (as we ſee here) at length the godly gets the victory. As in the conflict between the higher 5.

Chap. 7.

higher parts of the ſoul with the lower, it clearly appears, that the ſoul doth not riſe out of the temper of the body, but is a more noble ſubſtance, commanding the body by Reaſons fetched from its own worth; ſo in this ſpiritual conflict, it appears there is ſomething better than the ſoul it ſelf, that hath ſuperiority over it.

CHAP. VII.

Difference between good men and others in conflicts with ſin.

Queſt. BUt how doth it appear that this combate in *David* was a *ſpirituall* combate?

Anſw. 1. Firſt, a natural conſcience is troubled for ſins againſt the light of *nature* only, but *David* for inward and ſecret corruptions, as diſcouragement and diſquietneſſe ariſing from faint truſting in God.

Davids conflict was not only with the ſenſuall lower part of his ſoul, which is carried to eaſe and quiet, and love of preſent things, but he was troubled with a mutiny in his underſtanding, between *faith* and *diſtruſt*; and therefore he was forced

forced to rouze up his ſoul ſo oft to *truſt* in *God*, which ſhews that carnall reaſon did ſollicite him to diſcontent, and had many colourable reaſons for it. Chap. 7.

Secondly, a man indued with *common* grace, is rather a patient then an agent in conflicts; the *light* troubles him againſt his will, as diſcovering and reproving him, and hindring his ſinful contentments, his heart is more byaſed another way if the *light* would let him; but a godly man labours to help the *light*, and to work his heart to an oppoſition againſt ſin; he is an agent as well as a patient. As *David* here doth not ſuffer diſquieting, but is *diſquieted* with himſelf for being ſo. A godly man is an *agent* in oppoſing his corruption, and a *patient* in enduring of it; whereas a naturall man is a ſecret *agent* in and for his corruptions, and a *patient* in regard of any help againſt them; A good man ſuffers evil and doth good, a naturall man ſuffers good and doth evil. 2.

Thirdly, A conſcience guided by *common* light, withſtands diſtempers moſt by outward means, but *David* here fetcheth help from the Spirit of *God* in him, and from truſt in God. Nature works from 3.

Chap. 7. within, so doth the new nature; *David* is not only something *disquieted*, and something troubled for being disquieted but sets himself throughly against his distempers; he complains, and expostulates, he censures, and chargeth his soul. The other, if he doth any thing at all, yet it is faintly; he seeks out his corruption as a coward doth his enemy, loth to finde him, and more loth to encounter with him.

4. Fourthly, *David* withstands sinne *constantly*, and gets ground. We see here, he gives not over at the first, but presseth again and again. Nature works constantly, so doth the new nature. The conflict in the other is something forced, as taking part with the worser side in himself; good things have a weak, or rather no party in him, bad things a strong; and therefore he soon gives over in this holy quarrell.

5. Fifthly, *David* is not discouraged by his foils, but sets himself afresh against his corruptions, with confidence to bring them under. Whereas he that hath but a common work of the Spirit, after some foils, lets his enemy prevail more and more, and so despairs of victory, and thinks

thinks it better to ſit ſtill, than to riſe and take a new fall; by which means his later end is worſe than his beginning; for *beginning in the ſpirit, he ends in the fleſh.* A godly man, although upon ſome foil, he may for a time be diſcouraged, yet by holy indignation againſt ſin, he renues his force, and ſets afreſh upon his corruptions, and gathers more ſtrength by his falls, and groweth into more acquaintance with his own *heart*, and Satans malice, and Gods ſtrange waies in bringing light out of darkneſſe. Chap. 7.

Sixthly, An ordinary Chriſtian may be diſquieted for being diſquieted, as *David* was. but then it is only as diſquiet hath vexation in it; but *David* here ſtriveth againſt the unquietneſſe of his ſpirit, not only as it brought vexation with it, but as it hindred communion with his God. 6.

In ſin there is not only a *guilt* binding over the ſoul to Gods judgement, and thereupon filling the ſoul with inward fears and terrors; but in ſin likewiſe there is, 1. a contrariety to Gods holy nature; and 2. a contrariety to the Divine nature and image ſtamped upon our ſelves; 3. a weakning and diſabling of the ſoul from Evils of ſin. 1. 2. 3.

Chap. 7. 4. good; and 4. a hindring of our former communion with God, sinne being in its nature a leaving of God the fountain of all strength and comfort, and cleaving to the creature; hereupon the soul having tasted the sweetnesse of God before, is now grieved, and this grief is not only for the guilt and trouble that sin draws after it, but from an inward Antipathy and contrariety betwixt the sanctified soul and sin. It hates sin as sin, as the only bane and poyson of renewed nature, and the onely thing that breeds strangenesse betwixt God and the soul. And this hatred is not so much from discourse & strength of reason, as from nature it self rising presently against its enemy; The *Lamb* presently shuns the *Wolf* from a contrariety; Antipathies wait not for any strong reason, but are exercised upon the first presence of a contrary object.

7. Seventhly, hereupon ariseth the last difference; that because the soul hateth sin as sin, therefore it opposeth it universally & eternally, in all the powers of the soul, and in all actions inward and outward issuing from those powers; *David regarded no iniquity in his heart, but hated*

Psal. 66. 18.

every

every evil way, The desires of his soul were, *that it might be so directed, that he might keep Gods law.* And if there had been no binding law, yet there was such a sweet sympathy and agreement betwixt his soul and Gods truth, that he *delighted in it* above all naturall *sweetnesse*; Hence it is that Saint *John* saith, *He that is born of God cannot sin*, that is, so far forth as he is *born of God*; his *new* nature will not suffer him, he cannot lie, he cannot deceive, he cannot be earthly minded, he cannot but love and delight in the persons and things that are good. There is not only a light in the understanding, but a new life in the will, and all other faculties of a godly man; what good is knowledge discovereth, that his will makes choice of, and his heart loveth; What ill his understanding discovers, that his will hateth and abstains from. But in a man not throughly converted, the will and affections are bent otherwise, he loves not the good he doth, nor hates the evil he doth not.

Chap. 7. Psa. 119. 5.

1 Joh. 3. 9.

Therefore let us make a narrow search into our souls upon what grounds we oppose sin, and fight Gods battels. A com-

Use.

Chap 7.

mon Christian is not cast down, because he is disquieted in Gods service, or for his inward failings, that he cannot serve God with that liberty and freedome he desires. &c. But a godly man is troubled for his distempers, because they hinder the comfortable intercourse betwixt God and his soule, and that spiritual composednesse, and Sabbath of spirit which he enjoyed before, and desires to enjoy again. He is troubled that the waters of his soul are troubled so, that the image of Christ shines not in him as it did before. It grieves him to finde an abatement in affection, in love to God, a distraction or coldnesse in performing duties, any doubting of Gods favour, any discouragement from duty, &c. A godly mans comforts and grievances are hid from the world; natural men are strangers to them. Let this be a rule of discerning our estates, how we stand affected to the distempers of our hearts; If we finde them troublesome, it is a ground of comfort unto us that our *spirits* are ruled by a *higher Spirit*; and that there is a principle of that life in us, which cannot brook the most secret corruption, but rather casts it out

out by a holy complaint, as ſtrength of nature doth poyſon, which ſeeks its deſtruction. And let us be in love with that work of grace in us, which makes us out of love with the leaſt ſtirringe that hinder our beſt condition. Chap. 8.

See again, *We may be ſinfully diſquieted for that which is not a ſin to be diſquieted for.* *David* had ſinned if he had not been ſomewhat troubled for the baniſhment from Gods houſe, and the blaſphemy of the enemies of the Church; But yet (we ſee) he ſtops himſelf, and ſharply takes up his ſoul for being diſquieted: He did well in being diſquieted, and in checking himſelf for the ſame; there were good grounds for both: He had wanted ſpirituall life if he had not been diſquieted. He abated the vigour and liveliness of his life, by being overmuch diſquieted. *Obſer.* 9.

CHAP. VIII.

Of unfitting dejection: and when it is exceſſive. And what is the right temper of the ſoul herein.

Q. 1.

THen, *how ſhall we know when a man is caſt down and diſquieted, otherwiſe then is befitting?* *Queſt.*

Chap. 8. *Answ.*

There is a threefold miscarriage of inward trouble.

1. 1. *When the soule is troubled for that it should not be vexed for*, as *Ahab*, when he was crost in his will for *Nabothe* vineyard.

2. 2. *In the ground*, as when we grieve for that which is good, and for that which we should grieve for; but it is with too much reflecting upon our own particular.

As in the troubles of the *State* or *Church*, we ought to be affected; but not because these troubles hinder any liberties of the flesh, and restrain pride of life, but from higher respects; As that by these troubles God is dishonoured, the publike exercises of Religion hindred, and the gathering of souls thereby stopped: As the States and *Common wealth*, which should be harbors of the Church, are disturbed; as lawless courses and persons prevail; as Religion and Justice is triumphed over, and trodden under. Men usually are grieved for publike miseries from a spirit of self-love oely, because their own private is imbarqued in the publike. There is a depth of deceit of the heart in this matter.

3. 3. So for the measure, when we trouble our selves (though not without cause) yet without bounds. The

Chap. 8.

The ſpirit of man is like unto moiſt elements, as ayre and water, which have no bounds of their own to contain them in, but thoſe of the veſſell that keeps them: water is ſpilt and loſt without ſomething to hold it; ſo it is with the ſpirit of man, unleſſe it be bounded with the ſpirit of God. Put the caſe a man be diſquieted for ſin (for which not to be diſquieted is a ſin) yet we may look too much, and too long upon it, for the ſoul hath a double eye, one to look to ſin, another to look up to Gods mercy in Chriſt. Having two objects to look on, we may ſin in looking too much on the one, with neglect of the other.

Q. 2.

Queſt. *Seeing then, diſquieting and dejection for ſin is neceſſary, how ſhall we know when it exceeds meaſure?*

Anſw. 1. Firſt, *when it hinders us from holy duties, or in the performance of them*, by diſtraction or otherwiſe; whereas they are given to carry us to that which is pleaſing to God, and good to our ſelves.

Grief is ill when it taketh off the ſoul from minding that it ſhould, and ſo indiſpoſeth us to the duties of our callings.

Chriſt

Chap. 8.

Christ upon the Crosse was grieved to the utmost, yet it did not take away his care for his mother; so the *good Thief* in the midst of his pangs laboured to gain his fellow, and to save his own soul, and to glorifie Christ. If this be so in grief of body, which taketh away the free use of reason, and exercise of grace more than any other grief, then much more in grief from more remote causes, for in extremity of body the sickness may be such, as all that we can perform to God is a quiet submission, and a desire to be carried unto Christ by the prayers of others; we should so minde our grief as not to forget Gods mercy, or our own duty.

Luk. 23. 42.

2. Secondly, when we forget the grounds of comfort, and suffer our minde to run only upon the present grievance, it is a sinne to dwell on sinne, and turmoil our thoughts about it, when we are called to thankfulness. A Physician in good discretion forbids a dish at some times to prevent the nourishment of some disease, which another time he gives way unto. So we may and ought to abstain from too much feeding our thoughts upon our corruptions in case of discouragement, which

which at other times is very necessary. It should be our wisedom in such cases to change the object, and labour to take off our mindes, and give them to that which cals more for them: Grief oft presseth unseasonably upon us, when there is cause of joy, and when we are called to joy; as *Joab* justly found fault with *David* for grieving too much, when God had given him the victory, and rid him and the State of a traiterous son. God hath made some daies for joy, and joy is the proper work of those daies. *This is the day which the Lord hath made*, Some in a sick distemper desire that which encreaseth their sickness; so some that are deeply cast down, desire a wakening ministery, and whatever may cast them down more; whereas they should meditate upon comforts, and get some sweet assurance of Gods love. Joy is the constant temper which the Soul should be in. *Rejoyce evermore*, (saith the Apostle) If a sink be stirred, we stir it not more, but go into a sweeter room. So we should think of that which is comfortable, and of such truths as may raise up the soul, and sweeten the spirit.

Chap. 8.

Psa. 118. 24

1 Thes. 5. 16

Thirdly, Grief is too much, when it inclines 3.

Chap. 8.

inclines the soul to any inconvenient courses: (for if it be not lookt to, it is an ill counseller) when either it hurts the health of our bodies, or draws the soul (for to ease it self) to some unlawfull liberty. When grief keeps such a noise in the soul, that it will not hear what the messengers of God, or the still voice of the Spirit saith, as in combustions, loud cries are scarce heard: so in such cases the soul will neither hear it self nor others. The fruit of this overmuch trouble of spirit is encrease of trouble.

Q. 3.

Quest. 3. Another question may be, *What that sweet and holy temper is the soul should be in, that it may neither be faulty in the defect, nor too much abound in grief and sorrow?*

Answ. 1. The soul must be raised to a right grief.

2. The grief that is raised, though it be right, yet it must be bounded. Before we speak of raising grief in the godly, we must know there are some who are altogether strangers to any kinde of spirituall grief or trouble at all; such must consider, that the way to prevent everlasting trouble, is to desire to be troubled with a pre-

preventing trouble. Let thoſe that are not in the way of grace think with themſelves what cauſe they have not to take a minutes reſt while they are in that eſtate. For a man to be in debt both body and ſoul, ſubject every minute to be arreſted and carried Priſoner to Hell, and not to be moved: For a man to have the wrath of God ready to be powred out upon him, and Hell gape for him, nay, to carry a hell about him in conſcience (if it were awake) and to have all his comfort here hanging upon a weak thread of this life ready to be cut and broken off every moment, and to be curſed in all thoſe bleſſings that he enjoys; and yet not to be diſquieted, but continually treaſuring up wrath againſt the day of wrath, by running deeper into Gods Books: for a man to be thus, and not to be diſquieted, is but the Devils peace, whileſt the ſtrong man holds poſſeſſion. *A burning Ague is more hopefull then a Lethargy:* The beſt ſervice that can be done to ſuch men, is to ſtartle and rouze them, and ſo with violence to pull them out of the fire (as *Jude* ſpeaks) or elſe they will another day curſe that cruell mercy that lets them alone now. In all

Chap. 8.

Jude 23.

Chap. 8.

all their jollity in this world, they are but as a Book fairly bound, which when it is opened is full of nothing but Tragedies. So when the book of their consciences shall be once opened, there is nothing to be read but lamentations and woes. Such men were in a way of hope, if they had but so much apprehension of their estates, as to ask themselves, *what have I done?* If this be true that there are such fearfull things prepared for sinners, *why* am I not *cast down?* Why am I no more troubled and discouraged for my wicked courses? Despair to such is the beginning of comfort; and trouble the beginning of peace. A storm is the way to a calme, and hell the way to heaven.

I. Right grief, how raised.

But for raising of a right grief in the soul of a holy man, *look what is the state of the soul in it self, in what terms it is with God*; whether there be any sin hanging on the file unrepented of. If all be not well within us, then here is place for inward trouble, whereby the soul may afflict it self.

Lev. 16. 29.

God saw this grief so needfull for his people, that he appointed certain daies for afflicting them; because it is fit that sin

Chap. 8.

ſin contracted by joy ſhould be diſſolved by grief; and ſin is ſo deeply inveſted into the ſoul, that a ſeparation betwixt the ſoul and it cannot be wrought without much grief; when the ſoul hath ſmarted for ſin, it ſets then the eight price upon reconciliation with God in Chriſt, and it feeleth what a bitter thing ſinne is, and therefore it will be afraid to be too bold with it afterward; it likewiſe aweth the heart ſo, that it will not be ſo looſe towards God as it was before; and certainly that ſoul that hath felt the ſweetneſſe of keeping peace with God, cannot but take deeply to heart, that there ſhould be any thing in us that ſhould divide betwixt us and the fountain of our comfort, that ſhould ſtop the paſſage of our prayers, & the current of Gods favors both toward our ſelves and others, it is ſuch an ill as is the cauſe of all other ill, and damps all our comforts.

2. We ſhould look out of our ſelves alſo, conſidering whether for troubles at home and abroad, God cals not to mourning or troubling of our ſelves; grief of compaſſion is as well required as grief of contrition.

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It

Chap. 8.

It is a dead member that is not ſenſible of the ſtate of the body. *Jeremy* for fear he ſhould not weep enough for the diſtreſſed eſtate of the Church, deſired of God, *that his eyes might be made a fountain of tears.* A Chriſtian, as he muſt not be proud fleſh, ſo neither muſt he be dead fleſh; none more truly ſenſible either of ſin or of miſery (ſo far as miſery carries with it any ſigne of Gods diſpleaſure) then a true Chriſtian: which iſſues from the life of Grace, which (where it is in any meaſure) is lively, and therefore ſenſible: for God gives motion and ſenſes for the preſervation of life. As Gods bowels are tender towards us, ſo Gods people have tender bowels towards *him*, his *cauſe*, his *people*, and his *Church*. The fruit of this ſenſibleneſs, is earneſt prayer to God. (As *Melanchthon* ſaid well,) *If I cared for nothing, I would pray for nothing.*

Jer. 9. 1.

Si nil curarem, nil orarem.

2. Grief to be bounded.

2. Grief being thus raiſed, muſt, as we ſaid before, be bounded and guided.

1. When our affections are pliable.

1. God hath framed the ſoul, and planted ſuch affections in it, as may anſwer all his dealing towards his Children; that when he enlargeth himſelf towards them, then the ſoul ſhould enlarge it ſelf to him

him again, when he opens his hand we ought to open our hearts, when he shews any token of displeasure, we shold grieve; when he troubles us, we should trouble and grieve our selves. As God any way discovereth himself, so the soul should be in a sutable pliableness. Then the soul is as it should be when it is ready to meet God at every turn, to joy when he cals for it, to mourn when he cals for that, to labour to know Gods meaning in every thing. Chap. 8.

2. When fit to have communion with God.

Again, God hath made the soul for a communion with himself, which communion is especially placed in the affections, which are the springs of all spiritual worship. Then the affections are well ordered, when we are fit to have communion with God, to *love*, *joy*, *trust*, to *delight* in him above all things. The affections are the inward movings of the soul, which then move best when they move us to God, not from him. They are the feet of the soul, whereby we walk with, and before God. When we have our affections at such command, that we can take them off from any thing in the world, at such times as we are to have more near

Chap. 8.

Gen. 22. 5.

communion with God in *heaven* or *prayer, &c.* As *Abraham* when he was to ſacrifice, left whatſoever might hinder him at the *bottome of the Mount.* When we let our affections ſo far into the things of the world, as we cannot take them off when we are to deal with God; it is a ſigne of ſpiritual intemperancy. It is ſaid of the Iſraelites that they brought *Ægypt* with them into the wilderneſs; ſo many bring the world into their hearts with them, when they come before God.

3. When our affections are ſubordinate.

But becauſe our affections are never well ordered without judgment, as being to follow, not to lead; It is an evidence that the ſoul is in a fit temper, when there is ſuch a harmony in it, as that we judge of things as they are, and affect as we judge, and execute as we affect. This harmony within breeds uniformity and conſtancy in our reſolutions, ſo that there is (as it were) an even thred drawn through the whole courſe and tenour of our lives, when we are not off and on, up and down. It argues an ill ſtate of body when it is very hot, or very cold, or hot in one part, and cold in another; ſo unevenneſſe of ſpirit argues a diſtemper; a wiſe mans life

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is of one colour like it ſelf. The ſoul bred from heaven, ſo far as it is heavenly minded, deſires to be (like heaven) above all ſtorms, uniform, conſtant; not as things under the Sun, which are alwaies in changes, conſtant onely in inconſtancy. Affections are as it were the winde of the ſoul, and then the ſoul is carried as it ſhould be, when it is neither ſo becalmed that it moves not when it ſhould, nor yet toſſed with tempeſts to move diſorderly. When it is ſo well balaced that it is neither lift up, nor caſt down too much, but keepeth a ſteddy courſe. Our affections muſt not riſe to become unruly paſſions, for then as a river that overfloweth the banks, they carry much ſlime and ſoil with them. Though affections be the winde of the ſoul, yet unruly paſſions are the ſtorms of the ſoul, and will overturn all, if they be not ſuppreſſed. The beſt (as we ſee in *David* here) if they doe not ſteare their hearts aright, are in danger of ſudden guſts. A Chriſtian muſt neither be a dead ſea, nor a raging ſea.

Chap. 8.

Our affections are then in beſt temper, when they become ſo many graces of the Spirit; as when *love* is turned to a love

4. When our affections become graces,

Chap. 8.

of God; *joy*, to a delight in the best things; *fear*, to a fear of offending him more than any creature; sorrow, to a sorrow for sin, *&c.*

5. When fit to perform duties.

They are likewise in good temper, when they move us to all duties of love and mercy towards others; when they are not shut, where they should be open, nor open where they should be shut.

In case of Gods dishonour, exceeding affection is no excesse.

Yet there is one case wherein exceeding *affection* is not over exceeding; As in an extasie of zeal upon a sudden apprehension of Gods dishonor, and his cause trodden under foot. It is better in this case, rather scarce to be own men, than to be calm or quiet. It is said of Christ and *David*, that their hearts were eaten up with a holy zeal for Gods house. In such a case *Moses* unparalleld for *meekneſſe*, was turned into an holy rage. The greatnes of the provocation, the excellency of the object, and the weight of the occasion, bears out the soul, not onely without blame, but with great praise, in such seeming distempers. It is the glory of a Christian to be carried with full sail, and as it were with a spring-tide of affection. So long as the stream of affection runneth

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in the due channell, and if there be great occasions for great motions, then it is fit the affections should rise higher, as to *burn* with zeal, to be *sick of love*, to be *more vile* for the Lord, as *David*; to be counted *out of our wits* with Saint *Paul*, to further the cause of Christ and the good of souls. Chap. 8. Cant. 2.5. 1 Sam.6.12.

Thus we may see the life of a poor Christian in this world. 1. He is in great danger, if he be not troubled at all. 2. When he is troubled, he is in danger to be over-troubled. 3. When he hath brought his soul in tune again, he is subject to new troubles. Betwixt this ebbing and flowing there is very little quiet. Now because this cannot be done without a great measure of Gods Spirit, our help is to make use of that promise of giving *the holy Ghost to them that ask it*. To teach us *when*, how *long*, and how *much* to grieve: and *when*, and how *long*, and how *much* to rejoyce; the Spirit must teach the heart this, who as he moved upon the waters before the Creation, so he must move upon the waters of our souls, for we have not the command of our own hearts. Every natural man is carried away with The life of a Christian is a life of trouble. Excellent Joh.11,13.

Chap. 9. his flesh and humours, upon which the Devil rides, and carries him whither he list; he hath no better counsellors than flesh and blood, and Satan counselling with them. But a godly man is not a slave to his carnal affections, but (as *David* here) labours to bring into captivity the first motions of sin in his heart.

CHAP. IX.

Of the souls disquiets, Gods dealings, and power to contain our selves in order.

Obser. 1. MOreover we see, that *the soul hath disquiets proper to it selfe, besides those griefs of Sympathy that arise from the body*; for here the soul complains of the soul it self, as when it is out of the body it hath torments and joyes of its own. And if these troubles of the soul be not well cured, then by way of fellowship and redundance they will affect the outward man, and so the whole man shall be inwrapt in misery.

Obser. 2. From whence we further see, that *God, when he will humble a man, needs not fetch forces from without*, if he let but our own hearts

hearts looſe, we ſhall have trouble and work enough, though, we were as holy as *David*, God did not onely exerciſe him with a rebellious ſonne out of his own loyns, but with rebellious riſings out of his own heart. If there were no enemy in the world, nor devil in hell, we carry that within us, that if it be let looſe, will trouble us more than all the world beſides. Oh that the proud creature ſhould exalt himſelf againſt God, and run into a voluntary courſe of provoking him, who cannot onely raiſe the humours of our bodies againſt us, but the paſſions of our mindes alſo to torment us! Therefore it is the beſt wiſdome not to provoke the great God, for *are we ſtronger than he*, that can raiſe our ſelves againſt our ſelves? and work wonders not only in the great world, but alſo in the little world, our ſouls and bodies, when he pleaſes? Chap. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 22.

We ſee likewiſe hence a *neceſſity of having ſomething in the ſoul above it ſelf, it muſt be partaker of a diviner nature than it ſelfe*; otherwiſe, when the moſt refined part of our ſouls, the very ſpirit of our minds is out of frame, what ſhall bring it in again? Therefore we muſt conceive in a Obſer. 3.

Chap. 9.

godly man, a double ſelf, one which muſt be denied, the other which muſt deny; one that breeds all the diſquiet, and another that ſtilleth what the other hath raiſed. The way to ſtill the ſoul, as it is under our corrupt ſelf, is not to parlee with it, and divide government for peace ſake, as if we ſhould gratifie the fleſh in ſome thing, to redeem liberty to the ſpirit in other things; for we ſhall finde the fleſh will be too encroaching. We muſt ſtrive againſt it, not with ſubtlety and diſcourſe ſo much, as with peremptory violence ſilence it and vex it; An enemy that parlees will yeeld at length. Grace is nothing elſe but that bleſſed power, whereby as ſpirituall we gain upon our ſelves as carnall. Holy *love* is that which we gain of ſelf-love; and ſo *joy*, and delight, *&c.* Grace labours to win ground of the old man, until at length it be all in all; Indeed we are never our ſelves perfectly, till we have wholly put off our ſelves; nothing ſhould be at a greater diſtance to us, than our ſelves, This is the reaſon why carnall men that have nothing above themſelves but their *corrupt ſelf*, ſink in great troubles, having nothing within to uphold them,

them, whereas a good man is wiſer than *himſelf*, holier than himſelf, ſtronger than himſelf, there is ſomething in him more than a man. There be evils that the ſpirit of man alone out of the goodneſſe of nature cannot bear, but the ſpirit of man aſſiſted with an higher ſpirit, will ſupport and carry him through. It is a good triall of a mans condition to know what he eſteems to be *himſelf*. A godly man counts the inner man, the ſanctified part, to be himſelf, whereby he ſtands in relation to Chriſt and a better life. Another man eſteems his contentment in the world, the ſatisfaction of his carnall deſires, the reſpect he findes from men by reaſon of his parts, or ſomething without him, that he is maſter of, this he counts *himſelf*, and by this he values himſelf, and to this he makes his beſt thoughts and endeavours ſerviceable; And of croſſes in theſe things he is moſt ſenſible, and ſo ſenſible, that he thinks himſelf undone if he ſeeth not a preſent iſſue out of them. Chap. 9.

That which moſt troubles a good man in all troubles, is *himſelf*, ſo far as he is unſubdued; he is more diſquieted with *himſelf*, than with all troubles out of *himſelf*; when

Chap. 9.

when he hath gotten the better once of *himself*, whatsoever falls from without, is light; where the Spirit is enlarged, it cares not much for outward bondage; where the Spirit is lightsome, it cares not much for outward darknesse; where the spirit is setled, it cares not much for outward changes; where the spirit is one with it self it cannot bear outward breaches; where the spirit is sound, it can bear outward sicknesse. Nothiug can be very ill with us, when all is well within. This is the comfort of a holy man, that though he be troubled with himself, yet by reason of the spirit in him which is his *better self*, he works out by degrees, what-ever is contrary. As Spring-water being clear of it self, works it self clean, though it be troubled by something cast in; as the Sea will endure no poysonful thing, but casts it upon the shore. But a carnal man is like a Spring corrupted, that cannot work it self clear, because it is wholly tainted; his eye and light is darkness, and therefore no wonder if he seeth nothing. Sin lieth upon his understanding, and hinders the knowledge of it self; it lies close upon the will, and hinders the striving against it self.

True

Chap. 9.

True *self* that is worth the owning, is when a man is taken into a higher condition, and made one wich Christ, and esteems neither of himself nor others, as happy for any thing according to the flesh. 1. He is under the law and government of the Spirit, and so far as he is himself, works according to that principle. 2. He labours more and more to be transformed into the likeneſſe of Christ, in whom he esteemeth that he hath his best being. 3. He esteems of all things that befall him, to be good or ill, as they further or hinder his best condition. If all be well for that, he counts himself well, whatsoevsreſe befalls him,

Another man when he doth any thing that is good, acts not his own part; but a godly man when he doth good, is in his proper element; what another man doth for by-ends and reasons, that *he* doth from a new nature; which if there were no Law to compel, yet would move him to that which is pleasing to Christ. If he be drawn aside by passion or temptation, *that he* judgeth not to be himself, but taketh a holy revenge on himself for it, as being redeemed and taken out from himself;

Chap. 9.

ſelf; he thinks himſelf no *debtor*, nor to owe any ſervice to his corrupt ſelf. That which he plots and projects and works for is, that Chriſt may rule every where, and eſpecially in himſelf, for he is not his own but Chriſts, and therefore deſires to be more and more emptied of himſelf, that Chriſt might be *all in all* in him.

Thus we ſee what great uſe there is of dealing with our ſelves, for the better compoſing and ſetling of our Souls. Which though it be a courſe without glory and oſtentation in the world, as cauſing a man to retire inwardly into his own breaſt, having no other witneſſe but God and himſelf; and though it be likewiſe irkſome to the fleſh, as calling the ſoul home to it ſelf, being deſirous naturally to wander abroad, and be a ſtranger at home: Yet it is a courſe both good in it ſelf, and makes the ſoul good.

For by this means the judgement is exerciſed and rectified, the *will* and *affections* ordered, the whole man put into an holy frame fit for every good action. By this the *tree* is made good, and the fruit cannot but be anſwerable; by this the ſoul it ſelf it ſet in tune, whence there is a pleaſant harmony

harmony in our whole converſation. Without this, we may doe that which is outwardly good to others, but we can never be good our ſelves. The firſt juſtice begins within, when there is a due ſubjection of all the powers of the ſoul to the ſpirit, as ſanctified and guided by Gods ſpirit; when juſtice and order is firſt eſtabliſhed in the ſoul, it will appear from thence in all our dealings. He that is at peace in himſelf, will be peaceable to others, peaceable in his family, peaceable in the Church, peaceable in the State; The ſoul of a wicked man is in perpetuall ſedition; being alwaies troubled in it ſelf, it is no wonder if it be troubleſome to others. Unity in our ſelves is before union with others.

Chap. 9.

Unitas ante unionem.

To conclude this firſt part, concerning intercourſe with our ſelves. As we deſire to enjoy our ſelves, and to live the life of men, and of Chriſtians, which is, to underſtand our waies: As we deſire to live comfortably, and not to be acceſſary of yeelding to that ſorrow which cauſeth death: As we deſire to anſwer God and our ſelves, when we are to give an account of the inward tumults of our ſouls; As we

Chap. 10.

we desire to be vessels prepared for every good work, and to have strength to undergoe any crosse: As we desire to have healthy souls, and to keep a *Sabbath* within our selves: As we desire not onely to doe good, but to be good in our selves: So let us labour to quiet our souls, and often aske a reason of our selves, *Why we should not be quiet?*

CHAP. X.

Means not to be overcharged with sorrow.

TO help us further herein, besides that which hath been formerly spoken,

1. Changes must be forethought of

1. We must take heed of building an ungrounded confidence of happinesse for time to come: which makes us when changes come, 1. Unacquainted with them, 2. Takes away expectation of them: 3. And preparation for them. When any thing is strange and sudden, and lights upon us unfurnished and unfenced, it must needs put our spirits out of frame. It is good therefore to make all kinde of troubles familiar to us in our thoughts at least, and this will break the force

force of them. It is good to fence our ſouls before-hand againſt all aſſaults, as men uſe to keep out the Sea, by raiſing banks; and if a breach be made, to repair it preſently. Chap. 10.

We had need to maintain a ſtrong Garriſon of holy Reaſons againſt the aſſaults of ſtrong paſſions; we may hope for the beſt, but fear the worſt, and prepare to bear whatſoever. We ſay that a ſet dyet is dangeaous, becauſe variety of occaſions will force us upon breaking of it: So in this world of changes we cannot reſolve upon any certain condition of life, for upon alteration the minde is out of frame. We cannot ſay this or that trouble ſhall not befall, yet we may by help of the Spirit, ſay, nothing that doth befall, ſhall make me doe that which is unworthy of a Chriſtian.

That which others make eaſie by ſuffering, that a wiſe man maketh eaſie by thinking of beforehand. If we expect the worſt, when it comes, it is no more than we thought of: if better befalls us, then it is the ſweeter to us, the leſſe we expected it. Our *Saviour* foretells the worſt: *In the world you ſhall have tribulation*, therefore Job. 16. 33.

Quæ alii diu patiendo levia faciunt, ſapiens levia facit diu cogitando.

Chap. 10.

fore look for it, but then he will not leave us. Satan deludes with many promises: but when the contrary fals out, he leaves his followers in their distresses. We desire peace and rest, but we seek it not in its own place; Heb. 4.9. *There is a rest for Gods people*, but that is not here, nor yet; but it remains for them; Rev. 14.13. *they rest from their labours*, but that is after they are *dead in the Lord*. There is no sound rest till then. Yet this caution must be remembred, that we shape not in our fancies such troubles as are never likely to fall out. It comes either from weakness or guiltiness, to fear shadows. We shall not need to make crosses, they will (as we say of foul weather) come before they be sent for. How many evils do people fear, from which they have no further hurt, then what is bred only by their causless fears? Nor yet if they be probable, must we think of them so as to be altogether so affected, as if undoubtedly they would come, for so we give certain strength to an uncertain crosse, and usurp upon God, by anticipating that which may never come to passe. It was rashnesse in *David* to say, 1 Sam. 27.1 *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul.*

Caution.

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If they be ſuch troubles, as will *certainly* come to paſſe, as parting with friends and contentments (at leaſt) by death; then 1. *Thinke* of them ſo, as not to be much diſmayed, but furniſh thy heart with ſtrength before-hand, that they may fall the lighter. 2. *Think* of them ſo, as not to give up the bucklers to paſſion, and lie open as a faire marke for any uncomfortable accident to ſtrike to the heart; nor yet ſo think of them as to deſpiſe them, but to conſider of Gods meaning in them, and how to take good by them. 3. *Think* of the things we enjoy, ſo as to moderate our enjoying of them, by conſidering there muſt be a parting, and therefore how we ſhall be able to bear it when it comes. Chap. 10.

2. *If we deſire* not to be overcharged with ſorrow, when that which we fear is fallen upon us, we muſt then before-hand looke that our love to any thing in this world, ſhoot not ſo farre, as that, when the time of ſevering cometh, we part with ſo much of our hearts by that rent. Thoſe that love too much, will alwaies grieve too much. It is the greatneſſe of our affections which cauſeth the ſharpneſs of our 2.

Chap. 10.

afflictions. He that cannot abound without pride and high-mindedneſſe, will not want without too much dejectedneſſe. Love is planted for ſuch things as can return love: and make us better by loving them, wherein we ſhall ſatisfie our love to the full. It is pity ſo ſweet an affection ſhould be loſt: So ſorrow is for ſin, and for other things as they make ſinne the more bitter to us. The life of a Chriſtian ſhould be a meditation how to unlooſe his affections from inferiour things; he will eaſily die that is dead before in affection. But this will neeer be unleſſe the ſoul ſeeth ſomething better than all things in the world, upon which it may beſtow it ſelf. In that meaſure our affections die in their exceſſive motion to things below, as they are taken up with the love and admiration of the beſt things. He that is much in heaven in his thoughts, is free from being toſſed with tempeſts here below; the top of thoſe mountains that are above the middle Region, are ſo quiet, as that the lighteſt things (as aſhes) lie ſtill and are not moved. The way to mortifie *earthly members* that beſtir themſelves in us, is to *minde things above*: The more

Col. 3. 1. & 5.

the

Chap. 10.

the waies of wiſdom leade us on high, the more we avoid the ſnares below.

In the uncertainty of all events here, labour to frame that contentment in and from our own ſelves, which the things themſelves will not yeeld; frame peace by freeing our hearts from too much fear and riches by freeing our hearts from covetous deſires. Frame a ſufficiency out of contentednesſe; If the ſoul it ſelf be out of tune, outward things will do no more good than a fair ſhooe to a gouty foot.

And ſeek not our ſelves abroad out of our ſelves in the conceits of other men. A man ſhall never live quietly; that hath not learned to be ſet light by of others. He that is little in his own eyes, will not be troubled to be little in the eyes of others. Men that ſet too high a price upon themſelves, when others will not come to their price, are diſcontent. Thoſe whoſe condition is above their worth, and their pride above their condition, ſhall never want ſorrow; yet we muſt maintain our authority and the Image of God in our places, for that is Gods and not ours; and we ought ſo to carry our ſelves as we approve our ſelves to their conſciences,

Chap. 10.

though we have not their good words; *Let none despise thy youth*, saith Saint *Paul* to *Timothy*; that is, *walke so before them as they shall have no cause*. It is not in our own power what other men think or speak, but it is in our power (by Gods grace) to live so, that none can think ill of us, but by slandering, and none believe ill but by too much credulity.

3. 3. When any thing seiseth upon us, we must take heed we mingle not our own passions with it; we must neither bring sin to, nor mingle sin with the suffering: for that will trouble the spirit more than the trouble it self. We are more to deal with our own hearts, than with the trouble it selfe. We are not hurt till our souls be hurt. God will not have it in the power of any creature to hurt our souls, but by our own treason against our selves.

Therefore we should have our hearts in continual jealousie, for they are ready to deceive the best. In suddain encounters, some sin doth many times discover it selfe, the seed whereof lieth hid in our natures, which we think our selves very free from. Who would have thought the seeds

seeds of murmuring had lurked in the meek nature of *Moses?* That the seeds of *murther* had lurked in the *pitiful* heart of *David?* That the seeds of *denial* of *Christ* had lyen hid in the *zealous affection* of *Peter* towards *Christ?* If passions break out from us, which we are not naturally enclined unto, and over which by grace we have got a great conquest; how watchfull need we be over our selves in those things, which by *temper*, *custome*, and *company*, we are carried unto? and what cause have we to fear continually that we are worse than we take our selves to be? Chap. 10. 2 Sam. 12.9 Mat. 26.72.

There are many unruly passions lie hid in us, untill they be drawn out by something that meeteth with them; either 1. by way of opposition, as when the truth of God spiritually unfolded, meets with some beloved corruption, it swelleth bigger; the force of Gun-pouder is not known untill some spark light on it; and oftentimes the stilleſt natures (if crossed) discover the deepest corruptions. Sometimes it is drawn out by dealing with the opposite spirits of other men. Oftentimes retired men know not what lies hid in themselves.

Chap. 10.

2. Somtimes by croſſes, as many people whilſt the freſhnes & vigor of their ſpirits laſteth, and while the flower of age, and a full ſupply of all things continueth, ſeem to be of a pleaſing and calm diſpoſition; but afterwards when changes come, like *Jobs wife*, they are diſcovered. Then that which in nature is unſubdued, openly appears.

3. Temptations likewiſe have a ſearching power to bring that to light in us wch was hidden before. Satan hath been a winnower, and a ſifter of old: he thought if *Job* had been but touched in his body, he would have curſed God to his face.

Luk 22.3. Job 1.

Apperta perdunt odia vindicta locum.

Some men out of policy conceal their paſſion, until they ſee ſome advantage to let it out; as *Eſau* ſmothered his *hatred* until his *fathers death*. When the reſtraint is taken away, men (as we ſay) ſhew themſelves in their pure naturals; unlooſe a Tyger or a Lyon, and you know what he is.

Solve Leonem & ſenties.

4. Further, let us ſee more every day into the ſtate of our own ſouls; what a ſhame is it that ſo nimble and ſwift a ſpirit as the ſoul is, that can mount up to heaven, and from thence come down into the

Chap. 10.

the earth in an inſtant, ſhould whilſt it looks over all other things overlook it ſelf? that it ſhould be skillful in the ſtory (almoſt) of all times and places, and yet ignorant of the ſtory of it ſelf? that we ſhould know what is done in the *Court* and *Countrey*, and beyond the *Seas*, and be ignorant of what is done at home in our own hearts? that we ſhould live known to others, and yet die unknown to our ſelves? that we ſhould be able to give account of any thing better than of our ſelves to our ſelves? This is the cauſe why we ſtand in our own light; why we think better of our ſelves than others, and better than is cauſe. This is that which hindreth all reformation; for how can we reform that which we are not willing to ſee, and ſo we loſe one of the ſureſt evidences of our ſincerity, which is, a willingneſſe to ſearch into our hearts, and to be ſearched by others. A ſincere heart will offer it ſelf to triall.

And therefore let us ſift our actions, and our paſſions, and ſee what is *fleſh* in them. and what is *ſpirit*, and ſo ſeparate the *precious* from the *vile*. It is good likewiſe to conſider what ſin we were guilty of be-

Chap. 10.

fore which moved God to give us up to exceſſe in any paſſion, and wherein we have grieved his Spirit; Paſſion will be more moderate, when thus it knows it muſt come to the triall and cenſure. This courſe will either make us weary of paſſion, or elſe paſſion will make us weary of this ſtrict courſe. We ſhall find it the ſafeſt way to give our hearts no reſt, till we have wrought on them to purpoſe, and gotten the maſtery over them.

When the ſoul is inured to this dealing with it ſelf, it will learn the skill to command, and paſſions will be ſoon commanded, as being inured to be examined and checked; As we ſee dogs, and ſuch like domeſtical creatures, that will not regard a ſtranger, yet will be quieted in brawls preſently, by the voice of their *Maſter*, to which they are accuſtomed. This fits us for ſervice. Unbroken ſpirits are like unbroken horſes, unfit for any uſe, until they be thorowly ſubdued.

5. We muſt cruſh the firſt motions of ſin.

5. And it were beſt to prevent (as much as in us lieth) the very firſt *riſings*, before the ſoul be overcaſt; Paſſions are but little motions at the firſt, but grow as Rivers doe, greater and greater, the further they are

are carried from the Spring. The firſt *riſings* are the more to be looked unto, becauſe there is moſt danger in them, and we have leaſt care over them. Sin, like ruſt, or a Canker, will by little and little *eate out* all the graces of the ſoul. There is no ſtaying when we are once down the hill, till we come to the bottome. *No ſin but is eaſier kept out, than driven out.* If we cannot prevent wicked thoughts, yet we may deny them lodging in our hearts. It is our giving willing entertainment to ſinful motions, that encreaſeth guilt, and hindreth our peace. It is that which moveth God to give us up to a further degree of evil affections. Therefore what we are afraid to do before men, we ſhould be afraid to *think* before God. It would much further our peace to keep our *judgments* clear, as being the eye of the ſoul, whereby we may diſcern in every action and paſſion, what is good, and what is evil; as likewiſe to preſerve tenderneſs of heart, that may check us at the firſt, and not brook the leaſt evil being diſcovered. When the heart begins once to be kindled, it is eaſie to ſmother the ſmoke of paſſion, which otherwiſe will fume up into Chap. 10.

Chap. 10.

to the head, and gather into ſo thick a cloud, as we ſhall loſe the ſight of our ſelves, and what is beſt to be done. And therefore *David* here labours to take up his heart at the firſt; his care was to cruſh the very *firſt* inſurrections of his ſoul, before they came to break forth into open rebellion; ſtormes we know riſe out of little guſts. Little riſings neglected, cover the ſoul before we are aware. If we would check theſe riſings, and ſtifle them in their birth, they would not break out afterwards to the reproach of Religion, to the ſcandal of the weak, to the offence of the ſtrong, to the *grief of Gods Spirit* in us, to the diſturbance of our own ſpirits in doing good, and to the diſheartning of us in troubling of our inward peace, and thereby weakning our aſſurance. Therefore let us ſtop beginnings as much as may be; and ſo ſoon as they begin to riſe, let us begin to examine what raiſed them, and whither they are about to carry us. The way to be *ſtill*, is to *examine* our ſelves firſt; And then cenſure what ſtands not with reaſon. As *David* doth, when he had given way to unbefitting thoughts of Gods providence, *So fooliſh*, ſaith he,

Pſal. 4.

Pſal. 73. 22.

was

was I, and as a beaſt before thee. Chap. 10.

Eſpecially, then look to theſe ſinfull ſtirrings, when thou art to deal with God. I am to have communion with a God of peace; What then do turbulent thoughts and affections in my heart? I am to deal with a patient God, why ſhould I cheriſh revengeful thoughts? *Abraham* drove away the *birds* from the *ſacrifice*, *Gen.* 15. 11. Troubleſome thoughts like birds will come before they be ſent for, but they ſhould finde entertainment accordingly.

6. *In* all our grievances, let us look to ſomething that may comfort us, as well as diſcourage: look to that we enjoy, as well as that we want. As in proſperity God mingles ſome croſſes to diet us; ſo in all croſſes there is *ſomething to comfort us.* As there is a vanity lies hid in the beſt *worldly good*, ſo there is a bleſſing lies hid in the worſt *worldly evill.* God uſually maketh up that with ſome advantage in another kinde, wherein we are inferiour to others. Others are in greter place, ſo they are in greater danger. Others be richer, ſo their cares and ſnares be greater; the *poor in the world* may be *richer in faith* 6. Jam. 2.5.

Chap. 10.

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faith 6.

Chap. 10.

faith than they. The ſoul can better digeſt and maſter a low eſtate than a proſperous, and if under ſome abaſement, it is in a leſſe diſtance from God. Others are not ſo afflicted as we, then they have leſſe experience of Gods gracious power than we. Others may have more healthy bodies, but ſouls leſſe weaned from the world. We would not change conditions with them, ſo as to have their ſpirits with their condition. For one half of our lives, the meaneſt are as happy and free from cares, as the greateſt Monarch: that is, whilſt both ſleep; and uſually the ſleep of the one is ſweeter than the ſleep of the other. What is all that the earth can afford us, if God deny health? and this a man in the meaneſt condition may enjoy. That wherein one man differs from another, is but title, and but for a little time; Death levelleth all.

There is ſcarce any man, but the good he receives from God is more than the ill he feels, if our unthankful hearts would ſuffer us to think ſo. Is not our health more then our ſickneſſe? doe we not enjoy more than we want, I mean, of the things that are neceſſary? Are not our

our good daies more than our evil? but we would goe to heaven upon Roſes, and uſually one croſſe is more taken to heart, than an hundred bleſſings. So unkindly we deal with God. Is God indebted to us? doth he owe us any thing? thoſe that deſerve nothing, ſhould be content with any thing.

We ſhould look to others as good as our ſelves (as well as to our ſelves) and then we ſhall ſee it is not our own caſe only; who are we that we ſhould look for an exempted condition from thoſe troubles which Gods deareſt children are addicted unto?

Thus when we are ſurpriſed contrary to our looking for and liking, we ſhould ſtudy rather how to exerciſe ſome grace, than give way to any paſſion. Think now is a time to exerciſe our *patience*, our *wiſdome*, and other graces. By this means we ſhall turn that to our greateſt advantage, which *Satan* intendeth greateſt hurt to us by. Thus we ſhall not onely maſter every condition, but make it ſerviceable to our good. If nature teach *Bees*, not only to gather hony out of ſweet flowers, but out of bitter: Shall not grace teach

Chap. 10.

us to draw even out of the bittereſt condition, ſomething to better our ſouls? We learn to tame all creatures, even the wildeſt, that we may bring them to our uſe; and why ſhould we give way to our own unruly paſſions?

7. 7. It were good to have in our eye, the beauty of a well ordered ſoul, and we ſhould think that nothing in this world is of ſufficient worth to put us out of frame. The ſanctified ſoul ſhould be like the *Sun* in this, which though it worketh upon all theſe inferiour bodies, and cheriſheth them by light and influence; yet is not moved nor wrought upon by them again, but keepeth its own luſtre and diſtance: So our ſpirits being of a heavenly breed, ſhould rule other things beneath them, and not be ruled by them. It is a holy ſtate of ſoul to be under the power of nothing beneath it ſelf; Are we ſtirred? then conſider, Is this matter worth the loſſe of my quiet? What we eſteem, that we love, what we love, we labour for; And therefore let us eſteem highly of a clear calme temper, whereby we both enjoy our God, and our ſelves, and know how to rank all things elſe. It is againſt

nature

nature for inferiour things to rule that, which the wiſe diſpoſer of all things hath ſet above them. We owe the *fleſh* neither ſuit nor ſervice, we are no *debtors* to it. Chap. 10.

The more we ſet before the ſoul that quiet eſtate in heaven, which the ſouls of perfect men now enjoy, and it ſelf ere long ſhall enjoy there; the more it will be in love with it, and endeavour to attain unto it. And becauſe the ſoul never worketh better, than when it is raiſed up by ſome ſtrong and ſweet affection; let us look upon our nature, as it is in Chriſt, in whom it is pure, ſweet, calme, meek, every way lovely. This ſight is a changing ſight, love is an affection of imitation, we affect a likeneſſe to him we love. Let us *learne of Chriſt to be humble and meek*, and then we *ſhall finde reſt to our ſouls*. The ſetting of an excellent idea and platform before us, will raiſe and draw up our ſouls higher, and make us ſenſible of the leaſt moving of ſpirit, that ſhall be contrary to that, the attainment whereof we have in our deſires. He will hardly attain to mean things, that ſets not before him higher perfection. Naturally we love to ſee ſymmetry and proportion,

Anima nunquam melius agit, quam ex imperio alicujus inſignis affectus.

Mat. 11, 29.

Chap. 10.

tion, even in a dead picture, and are much taken with some curious peece. But why should we not rather labour to keep the affections of the soul in due proportion? Seeing a meek and well ordered soul is not only lovely in the sight of men and Angels, but is much set by, by the great God himself. But now the greatest care of those that set highest price upon themselves is, how to compose their outward carriage in some graceful manner, never studying how to compose their spirits; and rather how to cover the deformity of their passions than to cure them. Whence it is that the foulest inward vices are covered with the fairest vizards, and to make this the worse, all this is counted the best breeding.

The *Hebrews* placed all their happiness in peace, and when they would comprise much in one word, they would wish peace. This was that the *Angels* brought *newes* of from *Heaven*, at the birth of Christ. Now peace riseth out of quietnesse and order, and God that is *the God of peace, is the God of order* first. What is health, but when all the members are in their due posture, and all the humours in

1 Cor. 14. 33.

a

a ſetled quiet? Whence ariſeth the beauty of the world, but from that comely order wherein every creature is placed; the more glorious and excellent creatures above, and the leſſe below? So it is in the ſoul; the beſt conſtitution of it is when by the Spirit of God it is ſo ordered, as that all be in ſubjection to the Law of the minde. What a ſight were it for the feet to be where the head is, and the earth to be where the heaven is, to ſee all turned upſide down? And to a ſpirituall eye it ſeems as great a deformity, to ſee the ſoul to be under the rule of ſinfull paſſions. Chap. 10.

There muſt be an uniformity in the lives of Chriſtians.

Comelineſſe riſeth out of the fit proportion of divers members to make up one body, when every member hath a beauty in it ſelf, and is likewiſe well ſuited to other parts; A fair face and a crooked body, comely upper parts, and the lower parts uncomely, ſuit not well; becauſe comelineſſe ſtands in oneneſſe, in a fit agreement of many parts to one; when there is the head of a man, and the body of a beaſt, it is a monſter in nature; And is it not as monſtrous for to have an underſtanding head, and a fierce untamed heart? It cannot but raiſe up a holy in-

Chap. 10.

dignation in us againſt theſe riſings, when we conſider how unbeſeeming they are; What do theſe baſe paſſions in a heart dedicated to God, and given up to the government of his Spirit? What an indignity is it for Princes to go a foot, and ſervants on horſ-back? for thoſe to rule, whoſe place is to be ruled? as being good attendants, but bad guides. It was *Chams* curſe to be a *ſervant of ſervants.*

8. This muſt be ſtrengthened with a ſtrong *ſelf-deniall*, without which there can be no good done in Religion.

8.

There be two things that moſt trouble us in the way to heaven; corruption within us, and the croſs without us; that which is within us muſt be denied, that that which is without us may be endured. Otherwiſe we cannot follow him by whom we look to be ſaved. The gate, the entrance of Religion, is narrow; we muſt ſtrip our ſelves of our ſelves before we can enter; if we bring any ruling luſt to Religion, it will prove a bitter root of ſome groſſe ſin, or of apoſtaſie and final deſperation.

Chriſtians muſt deny themſelves.

Thoſe that ſought the *praiſe of men, more then the praiſe of God*, could not be-

Joh. 12.43.

leeve,

lieve, becauſe that luſt of ambition would when it ſhould be croſſed, draw them away. The young man thought it better for Chriſt to loſe a Diſciple, than that he ſhould loſe his *poſſeſſion*, and therefore *went away* as he came: The *third ground* came to nothing, becauſe the Plough had not gone deep enough to break up the roots, whereby their hearts were faſtned to earthly contentments. This ſelf-deniall we muſt carry with us through all the parts of religion, both in our active and paſſive obedience; for in obedience there muſt be a ſubjection to a ſuperiour; but corrupt ſelf, *neither is ſubject, nor can be*, it will have an oar in every thing, and maketh every thing, yea, Religion ſerviceable to it ſelf. It is the Idol of the world, or rather the god that is ſet higheſt of all in the ſoul; and ſo God himſelf is made but an idol. It is hard to deny a friend who is another ſelf, harder to deny a wife that lyeth in the boſome, but moſt hard to deny our ſelves. Nothing ſo near us as our ſelves to our ſelves, and yet nothing ſo farre off. Nothing ſo dear, and yet nothing ſo malicious and troubleſome. Hypocrites would part with the

Chap. 10.

Mat. 19. 22. Mat. 13. 22.

Rom. 8.

Mic. 6.

Chap. 11.

fruit of their body, ſooner than *the ſinne* of their ſouls.

CHAP. XI.

Signs of victory over our ſelves, and of a ſubdued ſpirit.

Queſt. *But how ſhall we know, whether we have by grace got the victory over our ſelves or not?*

Anſw. I anſwer, If in good actions we ſtand not ſo much upon the credit of the action, as upon the good that is done. What we do as unto God, we look for acceptance from God. It was *Jonas* his fault to ſtand more upon his owne reputation, than the glory of Gods mercy. It is a prevailing ſigne, when though there be no outward encouragements: nay, though there be diſcouragements, yet we can reſt in the comfort of a good intention. For uſually inward comfort is a note of inward ſincerity. *Jehu* muſt be *ſeen*, or elſe allis loſt.

1.

2 King. 10. 16.

2. It is a good evidence of ſome prevailing, when upon Religious grounds we can croſſe our ſelves in thoſe things unto which

2.

which our hearts ſtand moſt affected; this ſheweth we reſerve God his own place in our hearts. Chap. 11.

3. When being privy to our own inclination and temper, we have gotten ſuch a ſupply of ſpirit, as that the *grace* which is contrary to our temper appears in us. As oft we ſee, none more patient, than thoſe that are naturally enclined to intemperancy of paſſion, becauſe natural proneneſs makes them jealous over themſelves. Some out of fear of being overmuch moved, are not moved ſo much as they ſhould be: This jealouſie ſtirreth us up to a carefull uſe of all helps; Where grace is helped by nature, there a little grace will go farre; but where there is much untowardnes of nature, there much grace is not ſo well diſcerned, *Sowr wines needs much ſweetning*; And that is moſt ſpiritual which hath leaſt help from nature, and is won by prayer and pains. 3.

4. When we are not partiall when the things concern our ſelves. *David* could allow himſelf another mans wife, and yet judgeth another man worthy of death for taking away a *poor mans lambe*. Men uſually favour themſelves too much, when 4. 2 Sam. 12. 4

Chap. 11.

they are Chancellors in their own cauſe, and meaſure all things by their private intereſt. He hath taken a good degree in Chriſts School, that hath learned to forget himſelf here.

5. 5. Itis a good ſigne, when upon diſcovery of ſelf-ſeeking we can gain upon our corruption; and are willing to ſearch and to be ſearched, what our inclination is, and where it faileth. That which we favour, we are tender of, it muſt not be touched. A good heart, when any corruption is diſcovered by a ſearching *Miniſtery*, is affected as if it had found out a deadly enemy. Touchineſſe and paſſion argues guilt.

6. 6. This is a ſigne of a mans victory over himſelf, when he loves health and peace of body and minde, with a ſupply of all needfull things, chiefly for this end, that he may with more freedom of ſpirit ſerve God in doing good to others. So ſoon as grace entreth into the heart, it frameth the heart to be in ſome meaſure publique: and thinks it hath not its end, in the bare enjoying of any thing, until it can improve what it hath for a further end. Thus to ſeek our ſelves is to deny

deny our ſelves, and thus to deny our ſelves. is truly to ſeek our ſelves. It is no ſelf-ſeeking, when we care for no more than that, without which we cannot comfortably ſerve God. When the ſoul can ſay unto God, Lord as thou wouldſt have me ſerve thee in my place, ſo grant me ſuch a meaſure of health and ſtrength, wherein I may ſerve thee. Chap. 11.

But what if God thinks it good, that I ſhall ſerve him in weakneſſe, and in want, and ſuffering. *Queſt.*

Then, it is a comfortable ſigne of gaining over our own wils, when we can yeeld our ſelves to be diſpoſed of by God, as knowing beſt what is good for us. There is no condition but therein we may exerciſe ſome grace, and honor God in ſome meaſure. Yet becauſe ſome enlargement of condition is ordinarily that eſtate wherin we are beſt able to do good in; we may in the uſe of means deſire it, and upon that, reſign up our ſelves wholly unto God, and make his will our will, without exception or reſervation, and care for nothing more than we can have with his leave and love. This *Job* had exerciſed his heart unto; whereupon in that *Anſw.*

Chap. 11. Job 2.

great change of condition, *he ſinned not*, that is, fell not into the ſins incident to that dejected and miſerable ſtate; into ſins of rebellion and diſcontent. He carried his croſſes comely, with that ſtayednesſe and reſignednesſe, which became a holy man.

7. It is further a clear evidence of a ſpirit ſubdued, when we will diſcover the truth of our affection towards God and his people, though with cenſure of others. *David* was content to endure the cenſure of neglecting the ſtate and Majeſty of a King, out of joy for ſetling the Ark. *Nehemiah* could not diſſemble his grief for the ruines of the Church, though in the Kings preſence: It is a comfortable ſigne of the waſting of ſelf-love, when we can be at a point what becomes of our ſelves, ſo it goe well with the cauſe of God and the Church.

Neh. 2. 3.

Now the way to prevail ſtill more over our ſelves, (as when we are to do or ſuffer any thing, or withſtand any perſon in a good cauſe, &c.) is, not to think that we are to deale with men, yea, or with Devils ſo much as with our ſelves. The Saints reſiſted their enemies to death, by reſiſting

How to get to the maſtery of our ſelves.

Chap. 11.

resisting their own corruptions first: if we once get the victory over our selves, all other things are conquered to our ease. All the hurt Satan and the world doe us, is, by correspondency with our selves. All things are so farre under us, as we are above our selves.

Te vince & mundus tibi victus est, &c.

For the further subduing of our selves, it is good to follow sin to the first Hold and Castle, which is corrupt nature; The streams will lead us to the Spring head: Indeed the most apparent discovery of sin is in the outward carriage; we see it in the fruit before in the root; as we see grace in the expression before in the affection: But yet we shall never hate sinne throwly, untill we consider it in the poysoned root from whence it ariseth.

That which least troubles a naturall man, doth most of all trouble a true Christian; A natural man is sometimes troubled with the fruit of his corruption, and the consequents of guilt and punishment that attend it; but a true-hearted Christian, with corruption it selfe; this drives him to complain with S. *Paul*, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me*, not from the members only, but *from this body*

Rom. 7.

Chap. 11.

body of death? Which is as noysome to to my soul, as a dead carrion is to my senses; which together with the members, is marvellously nimble and active; and hath no dayes, or houres, or minutes of rest; alwayes laying about it to enlarge it self, and like spring water, which the more it issueth out, the more it may.

It is a good way, upon any particular breach of our inward peace, presently to have recourse to that which breeds and foments all our disquiet. Lord! what do I complain of this my unruly passion? I carry a *nature* about me subject to break out continually upon any occasion; Lord! strike at the root, and drie up the fountain in me. Thus *David* doth arise from the guilt of those two foul sins, of *Murther* and *Adultery*, to the sin of his nature, the root it self; as if he should say, Lord! it is not these actual sins that defile me only; but if I look back to my first conception, I was tainted in the spring of my nature.

Psa. 51.

This is that here which put *Davids* soul so much out of frame; For from whence was this contradiction? & whence was this contradiction so unwearied, in making

making head again and again againſt the checks of the Spirit in him? Whence was it that *Corruption* would not be ſaid Nay? Whence were theſe *ſudden* and unlookt-for objections of the *fleſh*? But from the remainder of old *Adam* in him, which like a *Michol* within us is either *ſcoffing* at the ways of God; or as *Job's wife*, fretting and *thwarting* the motions of Gods Spirit in us; which prevails the more, becauſe it is homebred in us: whereas holy motions are ſtrangers to moſt of our ſouls. Corruption is loth that a *new commer in* ſhould take ſo much upon him as to *controul*: As the *Sodomites* thought much that *Lot* being a *ſtranger* ſhould intermeddle amongſt them. If God once leave us as he did *Hezekiah* to trie what is in us, what ſhould he finde but darkneſs, rebellion, unrulineſs, doubtings, &c. in the beſt of us? This *fleſh* of ours hath principles againſt all Gods principles, and lawes againſt all Gods lawes, and reaſons againſt all Gods reaſons. Oh! If we could but one whole houre ſeriouſly think of the impure iſſue of our hearts, it would bring us down upon our knees in humiliation before God. But we can never whilſt we

Chap. 11.

Gen. 19. 9.

Chap. 11.

we live, ſo thoroughly as we ſhould, ſee into the depth of our deceitful hearts, nor yet be humbled enough for what we ſee; For though we ſpeak of it and confeſſe it, yet we are not ſo ſharpned againſt this corrupt fleſh of ours, as we ſhould. How ſhould it humble us, that the ſeeds of the vileſt ſin, even of the *Sin againſt the holy Ghoſt* is in us? And no thank to us that they break not out. It ſhould humble us to heare of any great enormous ſin in another man, conſidering what our own nature would proceed unto if it were not reſtrained. We may ſee our own *nature* in them as *face anſwering face*; If God ſhould take his *Spirit* from us, there is enough in us to defile a whole world; and although we be ingraffed into Chriſt, yet we carry about us a reliſh of the old ſtock ſtill. *David* was a man of a good natural conſtitution; and for grace, a man after Gods own heart, and had got the better of himſelf in a great meaſure, & had learned to overcome himſelf in matter of revenge, as in *Sauls* caſe: yet now we ſee the veſſel is ſhaken a little, and the dregs appear that were in the bottome before. Alas! we know not our own hearts, till

1 Sam. 24.6

we

we plow with Gods heifer, till his Spirit bringeth a light into our ſouls. It is good to conſider how this impure *ſpring* breaks out *diverſly*, in the divers conditions we are in; there is no eſtate of life, nor no action we undertake, wherein it will not put forth it ſelf to defile us: It is ſo full of poyſon that it taints whatſoever we doe, both our natures, conditions, and actions. In a *proſperous* condition (like *David*) we think we *ſhall never be moved*. Under the *Croſſe* the *ſoul* is *troubled* and drawn to murmur, and to be ſullen, and ſink down in diſcouragement, to be in a heat almoſt to blaſphemy, to be weary of our callings, and to quarrel with every thing in our way. See the folly and fury of moſt men in this, for us ſilly worms to contradict the great God: And to whoſe peril is it? Is it not our owne? Let us gather our ſelves with all our wit and ſtrength together: Alas! what can we doe but provoke him, and get more ſtripes? We may be ſure he will deal with us, as we deal with our children, if they be froward and unquiet for leſſer matters, we will make them crie and be ſullen for ſomething: Refractory, ſtubborn

Chap. 11.

Pſa. 30. 6.

Chap. 12.

born horſes are the more ſpurred, and yet ſhake not off the rider.

CHAP. XII.

Of originall righteouſneſs, naturall corruption, Satans joyning with it, and our duty thereupon.

§. 1.

BUt here mark a plot of ſpirituall treaſon; Satan joyning with our corruption, ſetteth the wit on work to perſwade the ſoul, that this inward rebellion is not ſo bad, becauſe it is naturall to us, as a condition of nature, riſing out of the firſt principles in our creation, and was curbed in by the bridle of originall righteouſneſſe, which they would have acceſſary and ſupernaturall, and therefore alledge that *concupiſcence* is leſſe odious and more excuſable in us, and ſo no great danger in yeelding and betraying our Souls unto it, and by that means perſwading us, that that which is our deadlieſt enemy, hath no harme in it, nor meaneth any to us.

Moſt of the moſt dangerous opinions of Popery, as Juſtification by *works*, ſtate of *perfection*, *merit*, *ſatisfaction*, *ſupererogation*, &c. ſpring from hence that they have fleight conceits of concupiſcence as a condition of nature; Yet ſome of them as *Michael Bayus* profeſſor at *Lovane*, &c. are found in the point.

This

Chap. 12. *Answ.* Gen. 1.

This rebellion of lusts against the understanding is not naturall, as our nature came out of Gods hands at the first: For this being evil and the cause of evil, could not come from God who is good, and the cause of all good, and nothing but good: who upon the creation of all things pronounced them *good*, and after the creation of man pronounced of all things that they were *very good*. Now that which is ill and very ill, cannot be seated at the same time in that which is good and *very good*: God created man at the first, *right*, he of himself *sought out many inventions*. As God beautified the heaven with stars, and decked the earth with variety of plants, and herbs, and flowers; So he adorned man his prime creature here below, with all those endowments that were fit for a happy condition, and originall righteousnesse was fit and due to an originall and happy condition. Therefore as the Angels were created with all Angelicall perfections, and as our bodies were created in an absolute temper of all the humours; so the soul was created in that sweet harmony wherein there was no discord, as an instrument in tune fit to be

Chap. 12.

be moved to any duty; as a clean neat glaſſe the ſoule repreſented Gods image and holineſſe.

§. 2.

Therefore it is ſo farre, that concupiſcence ſhould be *natural*, that the contrary to it, namely, *Righteouſneſſe*, wherein *Adam* was created, was natural to him; though it were planted in mans nature by God, and ſo in regard of the cauſe of it, was ſupernatural, yet becauſe it was agreeable to that happy condition, without which he could not ſubſiſt, in that reſpect it was natural, and ſhould have been derived (if he had ſtood) together with his nature, to his poſterity. As heat in the ayre, though it hath its firſt impreſſion from the heat of the Sun, yet is naturall, becauſe it agreeth to the nature of that element: and though man be compounded of a ſpiritual and earthly ſubſtance, yet it is natural that the *baſer* earthly part ſhould be ſubject to the *Superiour*, becauſe where there is different degrees of worthineſs, it is fit there ſhould be a ſubordination of the meaner to that which is in order higher. The body *naturally* deſires food and bodily contentments; yet in

in a man indued with reaſon, this deſire is governed ſo as it becomes not inordinate: A beaſt ſins not in its appetite, becauſe it hath no power above to order it. A man that lives in a ſolitary place far remote from company, may take his liberty to live as it pleaſeth him; but if he comes to live under the government of ſome well ordered City, then he is bound to ſubmit to the lawes, and cuſtomes of that City, under penalty, upon any breach of order. ſo the riſings of the ſoul, howſoever in other creatures they are not blameable, having no commander in themſelves, above them, yet in man they are to be ordered by reaſon and judgement. Chap. 12.

Therefore it cannot be, that *concupiſcence* ſhould be *natural*, in regard of the ſtate of creation; it was *Adams* ſin which had many ſins in the womb of it, that brought this diſorder upou the Soul; *Adams* perſon firſt corrupted our nature, and nature being corrupted, corrupts our perſons, & our perſons being corrupted, encreaſe the corruption of our nature, by *cuſtome* of ſinning, which is another nature in us; as a ſtream the farrher it runs from the ſpring-head, the more it inlargeth its

Chap. 12.

chanel, by the running of leſſer rivers into it, until it empties it ſelf into the Sea; So corruption till it be over-powred by *grace*, ſwelleth bigger and bigger, ſo that though this diſorder was not naturall, in regard of the firſt creation, yet ſince the *fall* it is become *naturall*, even as we call that which is common to the whole kind, and propagated from parents to their children, to be natural; So that it is both naturall and againſt nature, *naturall* now, but againſt *nature* in its firſt perfection.

1. And becauſe corruption is *naturall* to us, therefore 1. we *delight* in it, whence it comes to paſſe, that our ſouls are carried along in an eaſie current, to the committing of any ſinne without oppoſition.

2. 2. Becauſe it is *naturall*, therefore it is unwearied & reſtleſs, as light bodies are not wearied in their motion upwards, nor heavy bodies in their motion downwards, nor a ſtream in its running to the Sea, becauſe it is *naturall:* Hence it is that the *old man* is never tired in the *works of the fleſh*; nor never drawn dry. When men cannot act ſin, yet they will love ſin, and act it over again by pleaſing thoughts of it, and by ſinfull ſpeculation ſuck out the delight

delight of ſin; and are grieved, not for their ſin, but becauſe they want ſtrength and opportunity to commit it; If ſinne would not leave them, they would never leave ſin. This corruption of our nature is not wrought in us by reaſon and perſwaſions, for then it might be ſatisfied with reaſons, but it is in us by way of a naturall inclination, as iron is carried to the Loadſtone; And till our natures be altered, no reaſon will long prevail, but our ſinfull diſpoſition as a ſtream ſtopt for a little while, will break out with greater violence. 3. Being *naturall* it needs no help, as the earth needs no tillage to bring forth weeds. When our corrupt nature is carried contrary to that which is good, it is carried of it ſelf. As when Satan *lyes* or *murthers*, it comes from his own curſed nature; and though Satan joyneth with our *corrupt nature*, yet the proneneſſe to ſin, and the conſent unto it, is of our ſelves. Chap. 12. 3.

§. 3.

But how ſhall we know, that Satan joyns with our nature, in thoſe actions unto which nature it ſelf is prone? *Queſt.*

Then Satan addes his help, when our *Anſw.*

Chap. 12.

nature is carried more eagerly then ordinary to sin; as when a stream runs violently, we may know that there is not only the tide, but the winde that carrieth it.

So in sudden and violent rebellions, it is Satan that pusheth on *nature* left to it self of God. A stone falls downward by its own weight, but if it falls very swiftly, we know it is thrown down by an outward mover. Though there were no Devil, yet our corrupt *nature* would act Satans part against it self, it would have a supply of wickedness, (as a Serpent doth poyson) from it self, it hath a spring to feed it.

Nemo se palpet de suo, Satan est, &c Aug.

But that man whilst he lives *here* is not altogether excluded from hope of happiness, and hath a *nature* not so large and capable of sin as *Satans*; whereupon he is not so obstinate in hating God, and working mischief as he, &c. Otherwise there is for *kinde* the same *cursed* disposition, and *malice* of nature against true goodness in man, which is in the *Devils* and damned spirits themselves.

It is no mitigation of sin, to plead it is *natural*, for natural diseases (as leprosies) that are derived from Parents, are most dangerous

dangerous, and leaſt curable; Neither is this any excuſe, for becauſe as it is *naturall*, ſo it is *voluntary*, not only in *Adam*, in whoſe loins we were, and therefore ſinned; but likewiſe in regard of *our ſelves*, who are ſo far from ſtopping the courſe of ſin either in our ſelves or others, that we feed and ſtrengthen it, or at leaſt give more way to it, and provide leſſe againſt it than we ſhould, until we come under the government of grace: and by that means, we juſtifie *Adams* ſin, and that corrupt eſtate that followeth upon it, and ſhew, that if *we* had been in *Adams* condition our ſelves, *we* would have made that ill choice which he made. And though this corruption of our nature be neceſſary to us, yet it is no violent neceſſity from an outward cauſe, but a neceſſity that we willingly pull upon our ſelves, and therefore ought the more to humble us; for the more neceſſarily we ſin, the more voluntarily, and the more *voluntarily*, the more neceſſarily; the will putting it ſelf *voluntarily* into theſe fetters of ſin. *Neceſſity* is no plea, when the *will* is the immediate cauſe of any action; Mens hearts tell them they might rule their

Chap. 12.

Suſpirabam ligatus, non ferro alieno, ſed mea ferrea voluntate; velle meum tenebat inimicus, & inde mihi catenam fecerit. Aug. Confeſſ.

Chap. 12. *Quicquid ſibi imperavit animus, obtinuit.* Seneca.

their *deſires* if they would; For tell a man of any *diſh* which he liketh, that there is poyſon in it, and he will not meddle with it; So tell him that *death* is in that *ſinne* which he is about to commit, and he will *abſtain* if he believe it be ſo; if he believe it not, it is his voluntary unbelief and atheiſm.

If the will would uſe that ſoveraignty it ſhould, and could at the firſt, we ſhould be altogether freed from this neceſſity. Men are not damned becauſe they *cannot* do better, becauſe they *will* but do no better; If there were no *will*, there would be no hell; For men *willingly* ſubmit to the rule and law of ſin, they pleade for it, and like it ſo well, as they hate nothing ſo much as that which any way withſtandeth thoſe lawleſſe laws.

Ceſſet voluntas propria, & non erit infernus.

Thoſe that think it their happineſſe to do what they will, that they might be *free*, croſſe their own deſires, for this is the way to make them moſt perfect *ſlaves*. When our will is the next immediate cauſe of ſinne, and our conſciences bear witneſs to us that it is ſo; then conſcience is ready to take Gods part in accuſing our ſelves: Our conſciences tell us to

our

our faces that we might do more than we do to hinder ſin, and that when we ſin, it is not through weakneſs, but out of the wickedneſs of our nature.

Our Conſciences tell us that we ſinne not only willingly, but often with delight (ſo farre forth as we are not ſubdued by grace, or awed by ſomething above us) and that we eſteem any reſtraint to be our miſery. And where by grace the *will* is ſtrengthned, ſo that it yeelds not a full conſent, yet a gracious ſoul is humbled even for the ſudden riſings of corruption that prevent deliberation. As here *David*, though he withſtood the riſings of his heart, yet he was troubled, that he had ſo vile a heart that would riſe up againſt God, and therefore takes it down. Who is there that hath not cauſe to be humbled, not only for his corruption, but that he doth not reſiſt with that ſtrength, nor labour to prevent it with that diligence which his heart tels him he might?

We cannot have too deep apprehenſions of this *breeding* ſin, the *mother* and nurſe of all abominations; for the more we conſider the height, the depth, the bredth and length of it, the more ſhall

Chap. 12. Eph. 3. 18.

we be humbled in our ſelves, and magnifie the *height*, the *depth*, the *breadth*, and the *length* of Gods mercy in Chriſt. The favourers of *nature* are alwaies the enemies of *grace*; This which ſome think and ſpeak ſo weakly and faintly of, is a worſe enemy to us than the devil himſelf; a more near, a more reſtleſſe, a more trayterous enemy, for by intelligence with it the Devil doth us all the hurt he doth, and by it maintains forts in us againſt goodneſſe. This is that which either by diſcouragement or contrariety hinders us from good: or elſe by deadneſſe, tediouſneſſe, diſtractions, or corrupt aims hinders us in doing good: this putteth us on to evil, and abuſeth what is good in us, or from us, to cover or colour ſin; and furniſhes us with reaſons either to maintain what is evil, or ſhifts to tranſlate it upon falſe cauſes, or fences to arm us againſt whatſoever ſhall oppoſe us in our wicked waies: Though it neither can nor will be good, yet it would be thought to be ſo by others, and enforces a conceit upon it ſelf that it is good. It impriſons and keeps down all *light* that may diſcover it, both within it ſelf, and without it ſelf, if it

Chap. 12.

it lie in its power: It flatters it ſelf, and would have all the world flatter it too, which if it doth not, it frets; eſpecially if it be once diſcovered and croſſed: hence comes all the plotting againſt goodneſſe, that ſin may reign without controul. Is it not a lamentable caſe that man, who out of the very principles of nature cannot but deſire happineſſe and abhorre miſery, yet ſhould be in love with eternall miſery in the cauſes of it, and abhor happineſſe in the waies that leade unto it? This ſheweth us what a wonderfull deordination and diſorder is brought upon mans nature; For every other *creature* is naturally carried to that which is helpfull unto it, and ſhunneth that which is any way hurtfull and offenſive; Only man is in love with his own bane, and fights for thoſe luſts that fight againſt his ſoul.

§. 4.

I. Six fold duty in reſpect of natural corruption.

Our duty is, 1. to labour to ſee this ſinfull diſpoſition of ours, not only as it is diſcovered in the Scriptures, but as it diſcovers it ſelf in our own hearts; this muſt be done by the light and teaching of Gods Spirit, who knows us and all the turnings and windings and by-waies of our ſouls, better

Chap. 12.

better than we know our ſelves. We muſt *ſee* it as the moſt odious and lothſome thing in the world, making our *natures* contrary to Gods pure nature, and of all other duties making us moſt indiſpoſed to *ſpirituall* duties, wherein we ſhould have neareſt communion with God; becauſe it ſeizeth on the very ſpirits of our mindes.

2. 2. We ſhould look upon it as worſe than any of thoſe filthy ſtreams that come from it, nay, than all the impure iſſues of our lives together; there is more fire in the fornace than in the ſparkles; There is more poyſon in the *root* than in all the branches; for if the ſtream were ſtopt, and the branches cut off, and the ſparkles quenched, yet there would be a perpetuall ſupply; as in good things, the cauſe is better than the effect; ſo in ill things the cauſe is worſe. Every fruit ſhould make this poyſonfull *root* more hatefull to us, and the root ſhould make us hate the *fruit* more, as coming from ſo bad a root, as being wroſe in the cauſe, than in it ſelf; the *affection* is worſe than the *action*, which may be forced or counterfeited. We cry out upon particular ſins, but are not humbled as we ſhould be for our impure

Evils of not bewailing our corrupt nature.

Chap. 12.

pure diſpoſitions; Without the ſight of which there can be no *ſound repentance* ariſing from the deep and through conſideration of ſin; no deſire to be *new moulded*, without which we can never enter into ſo holy a place as heaven; no *ſelf-denial* till we ſee the beſt things in us are enmity againſt God; no high prizing of Chriſt, without whom our natures, our perſons, and our actions are abominable in Gods ſight; nor any ſolid peace ſetled in the ſoul; which peace ariſeth not from the ignorance of our corruption, or compounding with it, but from ſight and hatred of it, and ſtrength againſt it. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

3. Conſider the *ſpiritualneſs* and large *extent* of the *law* of God, together with the curſe annexed, which forbids not only particular ſins, but *all* the kindes, degrees, occaſions, and furtherances of *ſin* in the whole bredth and depth of it, and our very *nature* it ſelf ſo far as it is corrupted; For want of which we ſee many *alive without the law*, joviall and merry from ignorance of their miſery, who if they did but once ſee their natures and lives in *that glaſſe*, it would take away that livelineſſe and courage from them, and make them 3. Rom. 7. 2.

Chap. 12.

them vile in their own eyes; Men usually *look* themselves in the laws of the *State* wherein they live, and think themselves good enough, if they are free from the danger of *penall* statutes; this glasse discovers only foul spots, grosse scandals, and breakings out: Or else they judge of themselves by *parts* of *nature*, or common *grace*, or by outward conformity to *Religion*, or else by that light they have to guide themselves in the affairs of this life, by their fair and civill carriage, *&c.* and thereupon *live* and *die* without any sense of the *power of godlinesse*, which begins in the right knowledge of *our selves*, and ends in the right knowledge of God. The *spiritualnesse* and *purity* of the *law* should teach us to consider the purity and *holinesse of God*; the bringing of our souls into whose presence will make us to *abhor our selves* (with *Job*) *in dust and ashes*; Contraries are best seen by setting one near the other; Whilst we look only on our selves, and upon others amongst whom we live, we think our selves to be some-body. It is an evidence of some sincerity wrought in the soul, not to shun that light which may let us see the foul

Job 42.6.

corners

corners of our hearts and lives.

4. The conſideration of this likewiſe ſhould enforce us to carry a double *guard* over our ſouls: *David* was very watchfull, yet we ſee here he was ſurprized unawares by the ſudden rebellion of his heart; we ſhould obſerve our hearts as governours do rebels and mutinous perſons: Obſervation awes the heart; We ſee to what an exceſs ſin groweth in thoſe that deny themſelves nothing, nor will be denied in any thing; who if they may doe what they will, will do what they may; who turn *liberty* into licence, and make all their abilities and advantages to doe good, contributary to the commands of overuling and unruly luſts.

Were it not that God partly by his power ſuppreſſeth, and partly by his grace ſubdueth the diſorders of mans nature for the good of ſociety, and the gathering of a Church upon earth; *Corruption* would ſwell to that exceſſe, that it would overturne and confound all things together with it ſelf. Although there be a *common corruption* that cleaves to the nature of all men in generall, as men (as *diſtruſt* in God, *ſelf-love*, a carnall and *worldly diſpoſition*,

Chap. 12.

ſition, &c.) yet God ſo ordereth it, that in ſome there is an *ebbe* and decreaſe, in others (God juſtly leaving them to themſelves) a *flow* and encreaſe of ſinfulneſſe, even beyond the bounds of ordinary corruption, wherby they become worſe than themſelves, either like beaſts in ſenſuality, or like Devils in ſpiritual wickedneſſe; though all be blinde in ſpirituall things, yet ſome are more *blinded*: though all be hard-hearted, yet ſome are more *hardned*: though all be corrupt in evil courſes, yet ſome are more *corrupted*: and ſink deeper into rebellion than others.

Sometimes God ſuffers this corruption to break out in *civil* men, yea, even in his *own* children, that they may know themſelves the better, and becauſe *ſometimes* corruption is weakned not only by ſmothering, but by having a vent, whereupon *grace* ſtirs up in the ſoul *a freſh* hatred and revenge againſt it; and lets us ſee a neceſſity of having *whole* Chriſt, not onely to pardon ſin, but to purge and cleanſe our ſinful natures. But yet that which is ill in it ſelf, muſt not be done for the good that comes by it by accident; this muſt be a comfort after our ſurpriſals, not an encouragement before.

Caution.

5. And

Chap. 12. 5.

5. And becauſe the *Divine nature*, wrought in us by divine *truth*, together with the *Spirit of God*, is the only counter-poyſon againſt all ſin, and whatſoever is contrary to God in us, therefore we ſhould labour that the truth of God may be graffed in our hearts, that ſo all the powers of our ſouls may relliſh of it, that there may be a ſweet agreement betwixt the ſoul and all things that are ſpirituall, that truth being ingraffed in our hearts, we may be ingraffed into Chriſt, and grow up in him, and put him on more and more, and be changed into his likeneſſe. Nothing in heaven or earth will work out corruption, and change our diſpoſitions, but the Spirit of Chriſt, clothing divine truths, with a divine power to this purpoſe.

6. When corruption riſes *pray* it down, as Saint *Paul* did, and to ſtrengthen thy prayer, *claim* the promiſe of the new *covenant*, that God would *circumciſe our hearts*, and *waſh us with clean water*, that he would *write his law in our hearts*, and give us his *holy Spirit* when we *beg it*; And look upon Chriſt as a publike *fountain* open for *Judah* and *Jeruſalem to waſh in*. Herein

Chap. 12.

Herein consists our *comfort*, 1. that Christ hath all *fulnesse* for us, and that our nature is perfect in him; 2. That Christ in our nature hath satisfied divine justice, not only for the sin of our *lives*, but for the sin of our nature. And 3. that he will never give over until by his Spirit he hath made *our nature* holy and pure as his own, till he hath taken away not only the reign, but the very life and being of sinne out of our hearts. 4. That to this end he leaves his Spirit and truth in the Church to the end of the world, that the seed of the Spirit may subdue the *seed of the serpent* in us, and that the Spirit may be a never failing Spring of all holy thoughts, desires, and endeavours in us, and dry up the contrary issue and spring of corrupt nature.

1.
2.

And Christians must remember when they are much annoyed with their corruptions, that it is not their particular case alone, but the condition of all *Gods people*, lest they be discouraged by looking on the ugly deformed visage of old *Adam*: which affrighteth some so farre, that it makes them think, *No mans nature is so vile as theirs*; which were well if it tended to humiliation only; but Satan often abuseth

Chap. 13.

ſeth it towards diſcouragement and deſperation. Many out of a miſconceit think that corruption is greateſt when they feel it moſt, whereas indeed, the leſſe we ſee it and lament it, the more it is. Sighs and groans of the ſoul are like the *pores* of the body, out of which in diſeaſed perſons *ſick humours* break forth and ſo become leſſe. The more we ſee & grieve for *pride*, which is an immediate iſſue of our corrupted nature, the leſs it is, becauſe we *ſee* it by a contrary grace; the more *ſight* the more hatred, the more *hatred* of ſinne, the more love of grace, and the more *love* the more life, which the more lively it is, the more it is ſenſible of the contrary: upon every diſcovery & conflict corruption loſes ſome ground, and grace gains upon it,

CHAP. XIII.

Of Imagination, ſinne of it, and remedies for it.

§. 1.

Sinfulneſs and vanity ſeated in the *imagination* is a cauſe of much diſquiet.

AND amongſt all the *fatuities* of the ſoul moſt of the *diſquiet* and unneceſſary *trouble* of our lives ariſes from the *vanity* and ill government of that power of the ſoul which we call *imagination* and

Chap. 13.

opinion, bordering between the ſenſes and our underſtanding; which is nothing elſe but a ſhallow apprehenſion of *good* or *evil* taken from the *ſenſes*: Now becauſe *outward good* or *evil* things agree or diſagree to the ſenſes, and the life of *ſenſe* is in us before the uſe of *reaſon*, and the delights of ſenſe are *preſent*, and pleaſing, and ſutable to our natures: thereupon the *imagination* ſetteth a great price upon ſenſible good things; and the *judgement* it ſelf ſince the *fall*, until it hath an higher light and ſtrength, yeeldeth to our imagination; hence it comes to paſſe that the beſt things, if they be attended with ſenſible inconveniences, as *want*, *diſgrace* in the world, and ſuch like, are misjudged for *evil* things; and the very worſt things, if they be attended with reſpect in the world, and ſenſible contentments, are *imagined* to be the greateſt good: which appears not ſo much in mens *words* (becauſe they are aſhamed to diſcover their *hidden* folly and atheiſm) but the lives of people ſpeak as much, in that particular choiſe which they make. Many there are who think it not only a *vain* but a *dangerous* thing to ſerve God, and a *baſe* thing to be awed

awed with religious respects, they count the waies that Gods people take, no better then *madnesse*, and that course which God takes in bringing men to heaven by a plain publishing of *heavenly truths*, to be nothing but *foolishnesse*, and those people that regard it, are esteemed (as the *Pharisees* esteemed them that heard Christ) ignorant, base and despicable persons; Hence arise all those false prejudices against the waies of holiness, as they in the *Acts* were *sic* in entertaining the *truth*, because it was *a way every where spoken against*. The doctrine of the Crosse, hath the cross alwaies following it, which imagination counteth the most odious and bitter thing in the world. Chap. 13. Act. 28.22.

This *imagination* of ours is become the seat of vanity, and thereupon of vexation to us, because it apprehends a greater happinesse in outward *good* things than there is, and a greater *misery* in outward *evil* things than indeed there is; and when experience shews us that there is not that *good* in those things which we imagine to be, but contrarily, we finde much *evil* in them which we never expected, hereupon the soul cannot but be troubled. The

Chap. 13.

life of many men, and those not the meanest; is almost nothing else but a *fancie*; that which chiefly sets their wits awork, and takes up most of their time, is how to please their own imagination, which setteth up an *excellency* within it selfe, in comparison of which it despiseth all *true excellency*, and those things that are of most necessary consequence indeed. *Hence springs ambition*, and the veine of being great in the world; hence comes an unmeasurable desire of abounding in those things which the world esteems highly of, there is in us naturally a competition and desire of being *equal* or *above* others, in that which is generally thought to make us happy and esteemed amongst men; if we be not the *onely* men, yet we will be *some body* in the world, something we will have to be highly esteemed for, wherein if we be crossed, we count it the greatest misery that can befall us.

And which is worse, a corrupt desire of being great in the opinion of others, creeps into the *profession of religion*, if we live in those places wherein it brings *credit* or gain; men will sacrifice their very lives for vain glory: It is an evidence a man lives

lives more to *opinion* and *reputation* of others, than to *Conscience*; when his grief is more for being disappointed of that *approbation* which he expects from men, than for his miscarriage towards God. It marres all in *religion*, when we goe about heavenly things with earthly affections, and seek not Christ in Christ, but the world. What is Popery but an artificial frame of *mans brain* to please mens *imaginations* by outward state and pomp of *Ceremonies*, like that *golden Image* of *Nebuchadnezzar*, wherein he pleased himself so that to have uniformity in worshipping the same, he compelled all under pain of *death* to *fall down* before it; this makes *superstitious* persons alwayes cruel, because superstitious devices are the brats of our own imagination, which we strive for more than for the purity of Gods worship: hence it is likewise that superstitious persons are restlesse (as the woman of *Samaria*) in their own spirits, as having no bottome but *fancy* instead of *faith*. Chap. 13. Dan. 3.6.

§. 2.

Now the reason why *imagination* works so upon the soul, is, because it stirs up the *affections* answerable to the good or ill How sinfull *imaginations* work upon the soul.

Chap. 13.

which it apprehends, and our affection ſtir the humours of the body, ſo that oftentimes both our ſouls and bodies are *troubled* hereby.

Things work upon the ſoul in this order: 1. Some object is preſented. 2. Then it is apprehended by *imagination* as good and pleaſing, or as evil and hurtful. 3. If *good*, the deſire is carried to it with delight: if *evil*, it is rejected with diſtaſte, and ſo our *affections* are ſtirred up ſutably to our apprehenſion of the object. 4. Affections ſtir up the ſpirits. 5. The ſpirits raiſe the *humours*, and ſo the whole man becomes *moved* and oftentimes diſtempered; this falleth out by reaſon of the *ſympathy* between the ſoul and body, whereby what offendeth one redoundeth to the hurt of the other.

And we ſee *conceived* troubles have the ſame effect upon us, as *true*. *Jacob* was as much troubled with the *imagination* of his *ſons death*, as if he had been dead indeed; *imagination*, though it be an empty windy thing, yet it hath *reall* effects. *Superſtitious* perſons are as much troubled for neglecting any *voluntary* ſervice of *mans* invention, as if they had offended againſt

againſt the direct *commandment* of God: thus *ſuperſtition* breeds falſe fears, and *falſe* fear brings *true* vexation; it tranſforms God to an *Idoll*, imagining him to be pleaſed with whatſoever pleaſes our ſelves, when as we take it ill that thoſe who are under us ſhould take direction from themſelves, and not from us, in that which may content us. *Superſtition* is very buſie, but all in vain, *in vain they worſhip me*, ſaith God; and how can it chooſe but vex and diſquiet men, when they ſhall take a great deal of pains *in vain*, and which is worſe, to diſpleaſe moſt in that wherein they think to pleaſe moſt. God blaſteth all deviſed ſervice with one demand, *Who required theſe things at your hands?* It were better for us to ask our ſelves this queſtion before-hand, *Who required this? why do we trouble our ſelves about that which we ſhall have no thank for?* We ſhould not bring God down to our own *imaginations*, but raiſe our imaginations up to God.

Chap. 13.

Mat. 15. 9.

Eſay 1. 12.

Now *imagination* hurteth us, 1. By falſe repreſentations. 2. By preventing *reaſon*, and ſo uſurping a cenſure of things, before our *judgements* try them, whereas

Chap. 13.

the office of *imagination* is to minister matter to our *understanding* to work upon, and not to lead it, much less mislead it in any thing. 3. By forging matter out of it self without *ground*; the *imaginary* grievances of our lives are more than the *reall*. 4. As it is an ill instrument of the understanding to devise *vanity* and *mischief*.

§. 3.

The first remedy for hurtful imaginations. 2 Cor. 10. 5.

The way to cure this malady in us, is, 1. To labour to bring these *risings* of our souls into the obedience of Gods truth and Spirit; for *imagination* of it self, *if ungoverned*, is a *wild* and a *ranging thing*; it wrongs not onely the frame of Gods work in us, setting the *baser* part of a man above the *higher*, but it wrongs likewise the work of God in the creatures and every thing else, for it shapes things as *it self* pleaseth, it maketh *evill* good, if it pleaseth the senses; and *good* evill, if it be dangerous and distastefull to the outward man; which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unsetled soule. As if it were a god, it *can tell* good and evill at its pleasure, it sets up and pulls down the price of what it listeth: By reason of the *distemper* of imagination, the life of many

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is little else but a *dream*; Many *good* men are in a long dream of misery, and many *bad* men in as long a dream of happinesse, till the time of *awaking* come, and all because they are too much led by *appearances*; and as in a *dream* men are deluded with false joyes, and false fears; So here, which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unsetled soul; therefore it is necessary that God by his word and Spirit should erect a government in our hearts to *captivate* and order this licentious faculty. Chap. 13.

2. Likewise it is good to present *reall* things to the soul, as the *true* riches, and *true* misery of a Christian, the *true* honour and dishonour, *true* beauty & deformity, the *true* nobleness and debasement of the soul; What ever is in the world, are but *shadowes* of things in comparison of those true *realties* which Religion affords; and why should we vex our selves about a *vain shadow*? 2. Psal. 39.6.

The Holy Ghost to prevent further mischief by these outward things, gives a dangerous report of them, calling them *vanity*, *unrighteous Mammon*, *uncertaine riches*, *thorns*, yea *nothing*; because though they be not so in themselves, yet, our *imagination* Luk. 15.9. Prov. 23.5.

Chap. 13.

gination over-valuing them, they prove so to us upon triall: Now knowledge that is bought by *triall* is often deare bought, and therefore God would have us prevent this by a right *conceit* of things before hand, lest trusting to *vanity* we *vanish* our selves, and trusting to *nothing* we become *nothing* our selves, and which is worse, *worse* than *nothing*.

3. 3. Oppose serious *consideration* against vain *imagination*, and because our imagination is prone to raise false *objects*, and thereby false *conceits*, and *discourses* in us; Our best way herein is to propound *true* objects of the minde to work upon; as, 1. to consider the greatnesse and goodnesse of Almighty God, and his *love* to us in Christ. 2. The joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell. 3. The last and strict *day of account*. 4. The vanity of all earthly things. 5. the uncertainty of our lives, &c. From the meditation of these truths, the soule will be prepared to have *right* conceits of things, and to discourse upon true grounds of them, and thinke with thy selfe, that if these things be so *indeed*, then I must frame my life sutable to these principles; hence arise *true affections* in

in the ſoul, true fear of God, true love and deſire after the beſt things, &c. The way to expell winde out of our bodies, is to take ſome wholſome nouriſhment, and the way to expell windy fancies from the ſoul, is to feed upon ſerious truths. Chap. 29.

4. Moreover, to the well ordering of this unruly faculty, it is neceſſary that our nature it ſelf ſhould be changed; for as men are, ſo they *imagine*, as the *treaſure of the heart is*, ſuch is that which comes from it; An evil heart cannot think well: before the heart be changed our judgement is *depraved* in regard of our *laſt end*, we ſeek our happineſſe where it is not to be found; *wickedneſs* comes from the *wicked*, as the Proverb is. If we had as large and as quick *apprehenſions* as Satan himſelf, yet if the reliſh of our will and affections be not changed, they will ſet the *imagination* a-work, to deviſe ſatisfaction to themſelves. For there is a mutuall working and reflux betwixt the *will* and the *imagination*; the *imagination* ſtirs up the will, and as the will is affected, ſo imagination worketh. 4.

Mat. 12. 35. *Malus mens, malus animus.*

1 Sam. 24. 13.

When the *Law* of God by the Spirit is ſo *written in our hearts*, that the *law* and our

Chap. 13.

our hearts become agreeable one to the other, then the ſoul is inclined and made pliable to every good thought: When the heart is once *taught of God* to love, it is the nature of this ſweet *affection* (as the

1 Cor. 13. 5. Apoſtle ſaith) to *think no evill* either of *God* or *man*, and not only ſo, but it carries the bent of the whole ſoule with it to

Mat. 22. 27. good, ſo that we *love God* not only *with all our heart*, but *with all our minde*, that is, both with our *underſtanding* and *imagination*. Love is an affection full of *inventions*, and ſets the wit awork to *devi ſe* good things; therefore our chief care ſhould be, that our *hearts* may be *circumciſed* and *purified* ſo, as they may be filled with the *love of God*, and then we ſhall finde this duty not only *eaſie* but *delightfull* unto us. The Prophet *healed* the

2 King. 2. 20. *waters* by *caſting ſalt* into the *ſpring*, ſo the ſeaſoning of the *ſpring* of our actions ſeaſons *all*. And indeed what can be expected from man whilſt he is *vanity* but *vain imaginations?* What can we look

Eſay 59. 5. for from a *Viper* but *poyſon?* A man naturally is either *weaving ſpiders webs*, or *hatching Cockatrices eggs*, that is, his heart is exerciſed either in *vanity* or *miſchief*, for

for not onely the frame of the *heart*, but what the heart *frameth* is evill continually. A wicked man that is besotted with false *conceits*, will admit of no good thoughts to enter. Chap. 13. Gen. 6.5.

5. Even when we are *good* and devise good things, yet there is still some sickness of fancy remaining in the best of us, whereby we work trouble to our selves, and therefore it is necessary we should labour to restrain and limit our fancy, and *stop these waters* at the *beginning*, giving no not the least way thereunto. If it begins to grow *wanton*, tame the wildnesse of it by fastning it to the *Crosse* of Christ, *whom we have pierced with our sins*, and amongst other, with these *sins* of our *spirits*, who hath *redeemed* us from our *vain* thoughts and *conversations*; set before it the *consideration* of the wrath of God, of death, and judgment, and the wofull estate of the damned, &c. and take it not off till thy heart be taken off from straying from God; When it begins once to run out to impertinencies, confine it to some certain thing, and then upon examination we shall finde it bring home some *honey* with it; otherwise it will bring us Zach. 12. 10. 1 Pet. 1.18.

Chap. 13.

us nothing but a *sting* from the bitter remembrance of our former miſ-ſpent thoughts and time, which we ſhould *redeem* and fill up, with things that moſt *belong to our peace*. *Idleneſs* is the houre of *temptation*, wherein Satan joyns with our *imagination*, and ſets it about his own worke, to grinde his greeſe, for the ſoul as a Mill either grinds that which is put into it, or elſe works upon it ſelfe. *Imagination* is the *firſt wheel* of the ſoul, and if that move amiſs, it ſtirrs all the *inferiour wheels* amiſſe with it; It ſtirs it *ſelfe*, and other powers of the ſoul are ſtirred by its motion; and therefore the well-ordering of *this* is of the greater conſequence; For as the *imagination* conceiveth, ſo uſually the *judgment* concludeth, the *will* chuſeth, the *affections* are carried, and the *members* execute.

Luk. 19.47.

If it breake looſe (as it will ſoone run riot) yet give no conſent of the *will* to it, though it hath defiled the *memory*, yet let it not defile the *will*; though it be the *firſt born* of the ſoule, yet let it not as *Reuben* aſcend unto *the fathers bed*, that is, our *will*, and defile that which ſhould be kept pure for the *Spirit* of Chriſt; reſolve

Bernard.

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Chap. 13.

to act nothing upon it, but crosse it before it moves to the execution and practice of any thing: As in *sickneſſe*, many times we imagine (by reaſon of the corruption of our *taſt*) *Phyſick* to be ill for us, and thoſe meates which *nouriſh the diſeaſe* to be good, yet care of health makes us croſſe our owne *conceits*, and take that which fancy abhors: So if we would preſerve *ſound* ſpirits, we muſt conclude againſt *groundleſſe* imagination, and reſolve that whatſoever it ſuggeſts cannot be ſo, becauſe it croſſes the grounds both of *religion* and *reaſon*: And when we finde *imagination* to deceive us in *ſenſible* things (as Melancholy perſons are ſubject to miſtake) we may well gather, that it will much more deceive us in our *ſpirituall condition*; And indeed ſuch is the incoherence, impertinency, and unreaſonableneſs of *imagination*, that men are oft *aſhamed* and *angry* with themſelves afterwards for giving the leaſt way to ſuch thoughts; and it is good to *chaſtiſe* the ſoule for the ſame, that it may be more *wary* for time to come; whilſt men are led with *imagination*, they worke not according to right rules preſcribed to men, but as other baſer

creatures

Chap. 13.

creatures, in whom *phantasie* is the chief ruling power, and therefore those whose will is guided by their fancies live more like beasts than men.

We allow a horse to praunce and skip in a pasture, which if he doth when he is once backt by the rider, we count him an unruly and an unbroken jade: so howsoever in other creatures we allow liberty of fancy, yet we allow it not in man to friske and rove at its pleasure, because in him it is to be bridled with *reason*.

6. 6. Especially take heed of those cursed *imaginations* out of which as of mother *roots* others spring forth; as questioning *Gods providence*, and care of his children, his *justice*, his dis-regarding of what is done here below, &c. *thoughts* of putting off our amendment for time to come, and so *blessing our selves* in any evill way; *thoughts* against the necessity of *exact* and *circumspect walking* with God, &c. When these & such like *principles* of *Satans* and the *fleshes divinity* take place in our hearts, they block up the soul against the entrance of *soul-saving* truths, and taint our whole conversation, which is either *good* or *evill*, as the *principles* are by which we

Eph. 5. 15.

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are guided, and as our imagination is, which lets in all to the ſoul. Chap. 13.

The Jews in *Jeremies* time were foreſtalled with vain imaginations againſt ſound repentance, and therefore his counſell is, *Waſh thine heart O Jeruſalem, how long ſhall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. 4. 14.

7. Fancy will the better be kept within its due bounds, if we conſider the principal uſe thereof; Senſe and imagination is properly to judge what is comfortable or uncomfortable, what is pleaſing or diſpleaſing to the outward man (not what is morally or ſpiritually good or ill) and thus farre by the Laws of nature and civility we are bound to give fancy contentment both in our ſelves and others, as not to ſpeak or do any thing uncomely, which may occaſion a loathing or diſtaſte in our converſe with men: and it is a matter of *conſcience* to make our lives as comfortable as may be; as we are bound to love, ſo we are bound to uſe all helps that may make us *lovely*, and indear us into the good affections of others: As we are bound to give no offence to the conſcience of another, ſo to no power or *faculty* either of the outward or inward 7.

Chap. 13. man of another: Some are taken off in their *affection* by a *fancy*, whereof they can give but little reason; and some are more careleſſe in giving offence in this kinde, than ſtands with that Chriſtian *circumſpection* and mutuall reſpect which we owe one to another; The Apoſtles rule is of large extent, *Whatſoever things are* Phil. 4.8. not onely *true, and honeſt, and juſt*, but *whatſoever things are lovely, and of good report*, &c. *think of theſe things*. Yet our main care ſhould be to manifeſt our ſelves rather to mens *conſciences* then to their *imaginations*.

8. 8. It ſhould be our wiſedom likewiſe to place our ſelves in the beſt *conveniency* of all *outward helps* which may have a kinde working upon our fancy; and to take heed of the contrary, as *time, place*, and *objects*, &c. There be good *houres*, and good *Meſſengers* of Gods ſending, golden *opportunities*, wherein God uſes to give a meeting to his children, and *breaths* good thoughts into them. Even the wiſeſt and holieſt men (as *David* and *Solomon*, &c.) had no further ſafety then they were carefull of well-uſing all good advantages, and *ſequeſtring* themſelves from ſuch

such *objects* as had a working power upon them; by ſuffering their *ſoule* to be led by their *fancies*, and their *hearts* to run after their *eyes*, they betrayed and robbed themſelves of much grace and comfort, thereupon *Solomon* cries out with *griefe* and *ſhame* from his own experience, *Vanity of vanities*, &c. *Fancy* will take fire before we be aware. *Little* things are ſeeds of *great* matters, *Job* knew this, and therefore *made a covenant with his eyes*: But *a fools eyes* are in the *corners of the earth*, ſaith *Solomon*. Chap. 13. Eccleſ. 1. 2. Job 31. 1. Pro. 17, 24.

Sometimes the miniſtring of ſome *excellent thought* from what we *hear* or *ſee*, proves a great advantage of ſpirituall good to the ſoul: Whileſt Saint *Auſtin* out of curioſity delighted to hear the eloquence of Saint *Ambroſe*, he was taken with the matter it ſelf, ſweetly ſliding together with the words into his heart. Of later times, whileſt *Galeacens Caracciolus* an *Italian Marquaſſe*, and *Nephew to Pope Paul* 5. was hearing *Peter Martyr reading* upon 1 *Corinths*, and ſhewing the deceivableneſſe of mans judgement in ſpirituall things, and the efficacy of *divine* truth in thoſe that belong unto God, and *Praclara cogitatio.* *Beza* in his life.

Chap. 13.

further using a similitude to this purpose; "If a man be walking afarre off, and see "people dancing together, and hear no "noise of the *musick*, he judges them *fools* "and *out of their wits*; but when he comes "nearer and hears the musick, and sees "that every motion is exactly done by "art; Now he changes his minde, and is "so taken up with the sweet agreement of "the *gesture*, and the musick, that he is "not only delighted therewith, but de-"sirous to joyn himself in the number: "so it fals out (saith he) with men; Whilst "they look upon the outward carriage "and conversation of Gods people, and "see it *differing* from others, they think "them *fools*; but when they look more "narrowly into their courses, and see a "gracious harmony betwixt their lives "and the *Word* of God, then they begin "to be in love with the *beauty of holiness*, "and joyn in conformity of holy obedi-"ence with those they scorned before. This similitude wrought so with this Noble-man, that he began from that time forward to set his minde to the study of heavenly things.

One seasonable truth falling upon a pre-

prepared heart, hath oftentimes a ſweet and ſtrong operation; *Luther* confeſſeth that having heard a grave Divine *Staupicius* ſay, that *that is kinde repentance which begins from the love of God*, ever after that time the practice of repentance was ſweeter to him. This ſpeech of his likewiſe took well with *Luther*, that in doubts of *predeſtination we ſhould begin from the wounds of Chriſt*, that is, from the ſenſe of Gods love to us in Chriſt, we ſhould ariſe to the grace given us in *election before the world was*.

Chap. 13.

Doctrina prædeſtinationis incipit à vulneribus Chriſti.

2 Tim. 1.9.

The putting of lively colours upon common truths hath oft ſo ſtrong working both upon the fancy, and our will and affections: the ſpirit is refreſhed with freſh things, or old truths refreſhed; this made the Preacher ſeek to finde out pleaſing and acceptable words; and our Saviour Chriſts manner of teaching was, by a lively repreſentation to mens fancies, to teach them heavenly truths in an earthly ſenſible manner; and indeed what do we ſee or hear but will yeeld matter to a holy heart to raiſe it ſelf higher?

Eccl. 12.10.

We ſhould make our fancy ſerviceable to us in ſpiritual things, and take advan-

Chap. 13. tage by any *pleasure*, or *profit*, or *honour* which it presents our thoughts withall, to think thus with our selves, What is this to the true honour, and to those *enduring* pleasures, &c? And seeing God hath condescended to represent *heavenly* things to us under *earthly* terms, we should follow Gods dealing herein: God *represents* heaven to us under the term
Luk. 10. 32. of a *banquet*, and of a *kingdom*, &c. our *union* with Christ under the term of a *marriage*, yea, Christ himself, under the name of whatsoever is *lovely* or *comfortable* in heaven or earth. So the Lord sets out *Hell* to us by whatsoever is terrible or tormenting. Here is a large field for our imagination to walk in, not only without *hurt*, but with a great deal of spirituall *gain*; If the wrath of a *King* be as the *roaring* of a Lion, what is the wrath of the *King of Kings*? If *fire* be so terrible, what is *hell* fire? If a dark dungeon be so lothsome, what is that *eternall* dungeon of darkenesse? If a *Feast* be so pleasing,
Pro. 25. 15. what is the *continuall Feast of a good Conscience*? If the meeting of *Friends* be so comfortable, what will our meeting together in heaven be? The *Scripture* by such

such like terms would help our *faith* and *fancy* both at once; a sanctified *fancy* will make every creature a *ladder to heaven*. And because childhood and youth are ages of *fancy*, therefore it is a good way to instill into the hearts of children betimes, the *loving* of good, and the *shunning* of evil, by such like representations as agree with their *fancies*, as to hate *hell* under the representation of fire and darkness, *&c.* Whilst the soul is joyned with the body, it hath not only a *necessary* but a *holy* use of *imagination*, and of *sensible* things whereupon our imagination worketh; What is the use of the *Sacraments*, but to help our *souls* by our *senses*, and our faith by *imagination*? as the soul receives much hurt from imagination, so it may have much good thereby. Chap. 13.

But yet it ought not to *invent* or *devise* what is good and true in Religion, here *fancy* must yeeld to faith, and *faith* to divine revelation; the *things we believe* are such, as neither *eye hath seen, nor ear heard*, neither *came into the heart of man* by *imagination* stirred up from any thing which we have seen or heard; they are above not only *imagination*, but *reason* it 1 Cor. 2. 9.

Chap. 13.

ſelf, in men and Angels: But after God hath revealed ſpirituall truths, and faith hath apprehended them, then imagination hath uſe while the ſoul is joyned with the body, to colour divine truths, and make lightſome what faith believes; for inſtance, it doth not deviſe either heaven or hell, but when God hath revealed them to us; our fancy hath a fitneſs of enlarging our conceits of them, even by reſemblance from things in nature, and that without danger; becauſe the joys of heaven, and the torments of hell are ſo great, that all the repreſentations which nature affords us, fall ſhort of them.

Imagination hath likewiſe ſome uſe in religion, by putting caſes to the ſoul, as when we are tempted to any unruly action, we ſhould think with our ſelves, What would I doe if ſome holy grave perſon whom I much reverence ſhould behold me? Whereupon the ſoul may eaſily aſcend higher; God ſees me, and my own Conſcience is ready to witneſſe againſt me, &c.

It helps us alſo in taking benefit by the example of other men; Good things are beſt learned by others expreſſing of them

them to our view; the very ſight often (nay, the very thought) of a *good* man doth good, as repreſenting to our ſouls ſome good thing which we affect; which makes Hiſtories and the lively Characters and expreſſions of virtues and vices uſefull to us. The ſight, yea, the very reading of the ſuffering of the Martyrs hath wrought ſuch a hatred of that perſecuting Church, as hath done marvellous good; the ſight of juſtice executed upon Malefactors, works a greater hatred of ſin in men than naked precepts can do; So outward pomp and ſtate in the world, doth further that awful reſpect due to authority, *&c.*

Chap. 13. *Eſt aliquid quod ex magno viro vel tacente proficias.*

9. Laſtly, It would much avail for the well ordering of our thoughts, to ſet our ſouls in order every morning, and to ſtrengthen and perfume our ſpirits with ſome gracious meditations, eſpecially of the chief end and ſcope wherefore we live here, and how every thing we do, or befals us, may be reduced and ordered to further the main. The end of a Chriſtian is glorious, and the oft thoughts of it will raiſe and enlarge the ſoul, and ſet it on work to ſtudy how to make all things ſerviceable thereunto. It is a thing to

Chap. 13.

to be lamented that a Christian born for heaven, having the *price of his high calling* set before him, and matters of that *weight* and *excellency* to exercise his heart upon, should be taken up with *trifles*, and fill both his head and heart with vanity and nothing, as all earthly things will prove ere long; and yet if many mens thoughts and discourses were distilled, they are so frothy that they would hardly yeeld one drop of true comfort.

§. 4.

Object. Oh but (say some) thoughts and imaginations are free, and we shall not be accountable for them.

Answ. This is a false plea, for God hath a soveraignty over the whole *soul*, and his *law* bindes the whole inward and outward man; as we desire our whole man should be *saved* by Christ, so we must yeeld up the whole man to be *governed* by him; and it is the effect of the dispensation of the Gospel, accompanied with the Spirit, to captivate whatsoever is in man unto Christ, and to bring down all *high-towring imaginations* that exalt themselves against Gods *Spirit*. There is a divinity in the word of God powerfully unfolded, which will

Imaginations and thoughts not free.

2 Cor. 10. 5.

will convince our ſouls of the ſinfulneſſe of *natural imaginations*, as we ſee in the *Ideot*, *Corinth.* 14. who ſeeing himſelf *laid open* before himſelf, cryed out, that *God was in the ſpeaker*. Chap. 15. 1 Cor. 14. 25

There ought to be in man a conformity to the truth and goodneſs of things, or elſe 1. we ſhall *wrong* our own ſouls with falſe *apprehenſions*: And 2. the creature, by putting a faſhion upon it otherwiſe then God hath made: And 3. we ſhall wrong God himſelfe the *Author* of goodneſs, who cannot have his true glory but from a right apprehenſion of things as they are; What a wrong is it to men when we ſhall take up falſe prejudices againſt them without ground; and ſo ſuffer our *conceits* to be invenomed againſt them by unjuſt *ſuſpitions*, and by this means deprive our ſelves of all that good which we might receive by them? for our *nature* is apt to judge, & accept of things as the *perſons* are, and not of perſons according to the *things* themſelves: this *faculty* exerciſes a tyranny in the ſoul, ſetting up and pulling downe whom it will. *Job* judged his friends *altogether vaine*, becauſe they went upon a vaine 1. 2. 3. Job 27. 12.

imagina-

Chap. 13.

imagination and *discourse*, judging him to be an *Hypocrite* which could not but adde much to his affliction: when men take a toy in their head against a person or place, they are ready to reason as *he* did,

Joh. 6. 46. *Can any good come out of Nazareth?*

It is an indignity for men to be led with *surmises* and *probabilities*, and so to passe a rash judgement upon persons and things: Oftentimes *falshood* hath a fairer glosse of probability, than *truth*; and *vices* go masqued under the appearance of *vertue*, whereupon *seeming likenesse* breeds a mistake of one thing for another; and Satan oftentimes casts a mist before our imagination, that so we might have a mishapen conceit of things; by a spirit of *elusion* he makes worldly things appear bigger to us, and spirituall things lesser than indeed they are; and so by sophisticating of things our affections come to be misled. Imagination is the *wombe*, and Satan the *father* of all monstrous *conceptions* and disordered *lusts*, which are well called *deceitful lusts*, and *lusts of ignorance*, fooliſh and noysome lusts, because they both spring from errour and folly, and lead unto it.

Similitudo mater errorum.

Eph. 4. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9.

We

Chap. 13.

We ſee even in *Religion* it ſelf, how the *world* (together with the help of *the god of the world*) is led away, if not to worſhip images, yet to worſhip the image of their own *fancy*; And where the truth is moſt *profeſſed*, yet people are prone to *fancy* to themſelves ſuch a breadth of Religion, as will altogether leave them comfortleſſe, when things ſhall appear in their true colours; they will *conceit* to embrace truth without hatred of the world, and Chriſt without his croſs, and a godly life without perſecutions, they would pull a roſe without pricks; which though it may ſtand with their own baſe ends for a while, yet will not hold out in times of *change*, when ſickneſs of body & trouble of minde ſhall come; *Empty* conceits are too weak to encounter with real griefs.

Some think Orthodox and right *opinions* to be a plea for a *looſe* life, whereas there is no ill courſe of life but ſprings from ſome falſe opinion. God will not onely call us to an account how we have *believed*, *diſputed*, and *reaſoned*, *&c.* but how we have *lived*. Our care therefore ſhould be to build our *profeſſion* not on ſeeming *appearances*, but upon ſound

grounds

Chap. 13.

grounds, that the gates of hell cannot prevaile against. The hearts of many are so vaine, that they delight to be blown up with *flattery*, becouse they would have their *imaginations* pleased (yea, even when they cannot but know themselves abused) and are grieved to have their *windy* bladder pricked, and so to be put out of their *conceited* happinesse. Others out of a *tediousnesse* in serious and setled thoughts entertain every thing as it is offered to them at the first blush, and suffer their imaginations to carry them presently thereunto without further judging of it: the *will* naturally loves variety & change, and our *imagination* doth it service herein, as not delighting to fix long upon any thing; hereupon men are contented both in *religion*, and in *common* life to be *misled* with prejudices upon shallow grounds: Whence it is that the best *things* and *persons* suffer much in the world, the power and practice of Religion is hated under odious names, and so condemned before it is understood; Whence we see a necessity of getting Spirituall *Eye-salve*, for without true *knowledge* the heart cannot be *good*,

Prov. 19.2.

It

It is just with God that those who take *liberty* in their *thoughts* should be given up to their *own imaginations*, to delight in them, and to be out of conceit with the best things, and so to reap the fruit of their *own* waies. Nay, even the best of Gods people, if they take liberty herein, God will let loose their *imagination* upon themselves, and suffer them to be intangled and vexed with their owne hearts; Those that give way to their *imaginations*, shew what their *actions* should be, if they dared; for if they forbear doing evil out of *conscience*, they should as well forbear *imagining* evil; for *both* are alike *open* to God and hatefull to him; and therefore oft where there is no conscience of the *thought*, God gives men up to the *deed*. The greatest, and hardest work of a Christian is least in sight, which is the well ordering of *his heart*; some buildings have most workmanship under ground; it is our spirits *that God who is a Spirit* hath most communion with all; and the lesse freedome we take to sin here, the more argument of our sincerity, because there is no *laws* to binde the inner man but the law of the *Spirit of grace*, whereby we are

Chap. 13.

Joh. 4. 24.

Chap. 13.

a law to our selves. A good Christian begins his repentance where his sin begins, *in his thoughts*, which are the next issue of his heart. God counts it an honour when we regard his *all-seeing eye* so much, as that we will not take liberty to our selves in that which is offensive to him, no, not in our *hearts*, wherein no creature can hinder us; It is an argument that the *Spirit* hath set up a *kingdome* and *order* in our hearts, when our spirits rise within us against any thing that lifts it self up against goodnesse.

Q. 5.

Object. Many flatter themselves, from an *impossibility* of ruling their *imaginations*, and are ready to lay all upon *infirmity* and *natural weaknesse*, *&c.*

Answ. Not impossible to rule the imagination, and how.

But such must know that if we be sound Christians, the *Spirit* of God will enable us to doe all things (Evangelical) that we are *called unto*, if we give way without check to the motions thereof; where the Spirit is, it is such a *light*, as discovers not only dunghills, but *motes* themselves, even *light* and *flying imaginations*, and abaseth the soul for them, and by degrees purgeth them out; and if they presse (as they are

are as busie as flies in Summer) yet a good heart will not own them, nor allow himself in them, but casts them off, as hot water doth the scum, or as the stomack doth that which is noysome unto it, they finde not that entertainment here which they have in carnal hearts, where the scum soaks in; which are *Stews* of *uncleane* thoughts, Shambles of *cruell* and bloudy thoughts, Exchanges and shops of *vain* thoughts, a very forge and mint of *false politick*, and *undermining* thoughts, yea, often a little Hell of confused and black imaginations. There is nothing that more moveth a godly man to renew his interest every day in the perfect righteousnesse and obedience of his *Saviour*, than these sinfull *stirrings* of his soul, when he findes something in himself alwaies *inticing* and *drawing* away his heart from God, and intermingling it self with his best performances. Even *good* thoughts are troublesome if they come *unseasonably*, and weaken our exact performance of duty. Chap. 13.

§. 6.

But here some misconceits must be taken heed of. Misconceits about imagination to be avoided.

1. As we must take heed that we ac- 1.

Chap. 13. count not our imaginations to be *religion*; So we muſt not account *true religion*, and the *power of godlineſſe* to be a matter of imagination only; as if holy men troubled themſelves more then needs, when they ſtand upon *religion* and *conſcience*, ſeeking to *approve* themſelves *to God in all things*, and endeavoring (ſo far as frailty will permit) ro *avoid all appearances of evil*. Many men are ſo ſerious in vanities, and reall in trifles, that they count all, which dote not upon ſuch outward excellencies as they do (becauſe the Spirit of God hath revealed to them things of a higher nature) to be fantaſticks and humorous people, and ſo impute the work of the Spirit to the fleſh, Gods work to Satan, which comes near unto blaſphemy: they imagine good men to be led with vain *conceits*, but good men know them to be ſo led. Not only S. *Paul*, but *Chriſt* himſelf, were counted beſides themſelves, when they were earneſt for God & the ſouls of his people. But there is enough in Religion to bear up the ſoul againſt all imputations laid upon it: the true children of wiſdom are alwaies able to juſtifie their mother, and the conſcionable practice of holy duties, is found-

1 The. 5. 22

Act. 26. 24.

Mat. 11. 19.

ded

ded upon ſuch ſolid grounds as ſhall hold out when heaven and earth ſhall vaniſh. Chap. 13.

2. We muſt know that as there is great danger in falſe conceits of the way to heaven, when we make it *broader* then 'tis, for by this means we are like men going over a bridge, who think it broader then it is, but being deceived by ſome ſhadow, ſink down, and are ſuddenly drowned; So men miſtaking the ſtrait way to life, and truſting to the *ſhadow* of their own *imagination*, fall into the bottomleſſe pit of hell before they are aware. In like manner the danger is great in making the way to heavan *narrower* then indeed it is by weak and ſuperſtitious *imaginations*, making more ſins than God hath made. The *Wiſe mans* counſell is that we ſhould not make our ſelves *over-wicked*, not be *fooliſher then we are*, by deviſing more ſins in our *imagination*, then we are guilty of. 2. Eccl. 7.17.

It is good in this reſpect, to know our *Chriſtian liberty*, which being one of the fruits of Chriſts death, we cannot neglect the ſame, without much wrong not only to our ſelves, but to the rich bounty and goodneſſe of God. So that the due rules of limitation be obſerved, from *authority*,

Chap. 13. *piety, ſobriety, needleſs offence* of others, &c. we may with better leave uſe all thoſe *comforts* which God hath given to refreſh us in the way to *heaven*, than refuſe them; the care of the outward man bindes conſcience ſo farre, as that we ſhould neglect nothing which may help us in a cheerfull ſerving of God, in our places, and tend to the due honour of our bodies which are the *temples of the holy Ghoſt*, and companions with our ſouls in all performances. So that under this pretence we take not too much liberty to ſatisfie the luſts of the *body*. Intemperate uſe of the creatures is the nurſe of all paſſions: becauſe our ſpirits which are the ſouls inſtruments, are hereby inflamed and diſturbed; it is no wonder to ſee an intemperate man tranſported into any paſſion.

1 Cor. 3. 16, 17.

3. 3. Some out of their high and *aery* imaginations (and out of their *iron* and flinty Philoſophy) will needs think *outward* good and ill, together with the *affections* of grief and delight ſtirred up thereby to be but opinions and *conceits* of good and evil only, not *true* and *really* ſo founded in *nature*, but taken up of our ſelves: But though our fancy be ready to conceit

a greater hurt in outward evils than indeed there is (as in *poverty*, *pain* of *body*, *death* of *friends*, &c.) yet we muſt not deny them to be *evils*: that *wormwood* is bitter, it is not a conceit only, but the nature of the thing it ſelf, yet to abſtain from it altogether for the bitterneſſe thereof is a hurtfull conceit. That *honey* is ſweet, it is not a *conceit* only, but the *naturall quality* of it is ſo; yet out of a taſte of the ſweetneſs, to think we cannot take too much of it, is a *miſconceit* paid home with lothſome bitterneſs. Outward good and outward evil and the affections of *delight* and *ſorrow* riſing thence, are *naturally* ſo, and depend not upon our opinion. This were to offer violence to *nature*, and to take *man* out of *man*, as if he were not *fleſh* but *ſteel*; Univerſall experience from the ſenſibleneſſe of our nature in any *outward grievance*, is ſufficient to damn this conceit.

The way to *comfort* a man in *grief*, is not to tell him that it is only a *conceit* of evil, and no *evil* indeed that he *ſuffers*; this kinde of learning will not down with him, as being contrary to his preſent *feeling*; but the way is, to yeeld unto him

Chap. 13.

that there is cause of *grieving*, though not of *overgrieving*, and to shew him grounds of *comfort* stronger than the *grief* he suffers. We should weigh the *degrees* of evil in a right ballance, and not suffer fancy to make them greater than they are; So as that for obtaining the greatest outward good, or avoiding the greatest outward ill of *suffering*, we should give way to the least *evil of sin*. This is but a *policy* of the flesh to take away the sensibleness of evil, that so those checks of conscience and repentance for sin, which is oft occasioned thereby, might be taken away; that so men may go on enjoying a stupid happiness, never laying any thing to heart, nor afflicting their souls, until their consciences awaken in the place of the damned, and then they feel that grief return upon them for ever, which they laboured to put away when it might have been seasonable to them.

§. 7.

This is a very pertinent doctrine, and why.

I have stood the longer upon this, because Satan and his instruments by bewitching the imagination with false appearances, misleadeth not only the world, but troubleth the peace of men *taken out*

of

of the world, whose estate is laid up safe in Christ, who (notwithstanding) passe their few daies here in an uncomfortable, wearisome, and unnecessary *sadnesse of spirit*, being kept in ignorance of their happy condition by Satans jugling and their own mistakes, and so come to heaven before they are aware. Some again passe their daies in a golden *dream*, and drop into *hell* before they think of it; but it is farre better to dream of *ill*, and when we awake to finde it but a *dream*, than to dream of some great *good*, and when we awake to finde the contrary. Chap. 13.

As the distemper of the fancy disturbing the act of reason, oftentimes breeds madnesse in regard of civil conversation; So it breeds likewise spiritual madnesse, carrying men to those things, which if they were in their right wits they would utterly abhor; therefore we cannot have too much care upon what we fix our thoughts; And what a glorious discovery is there of the excellencies of Religion that would even ravish an Angel, which may raise up, exercise, and fill our hearts? We see our fancy hath so great a force in natural conceptions, that it oft sets a *Lasa phantasia.*

Chap 13.

mark and *impreſſion* upon that which is *conceived* in the *womb*; So likewiſe ſtrong and *holy* conceits of things (having a divine virtue accompanying of them) tranſform the ſoul, and breed ſpirituall impreſſions anſwerable to our ſpirituall apprehenſions. It would prevent many *croſſes*, if we would conceive of things as they are; When *trouble* of minde, or *ſickneſſe* of body, and *death* it ſelf cometh, what will remain of all that *greatneſſe* which filled our fancies before? then we can *judge* ſoberly, and *ſpeak* gravely of things. The beſt way of happineſſe, is not to *multiply* honours or riches, &c. but to *cure* our conceits of things, and then we cannot be very much caſt down with any thing befals us here.

Therefore when any thing is preſented to our ſouls, which we ſee is ready to work upon us; we ſhould ask of our ſelves upon what ground we entertain ſuch a conceit, whether we ſhall have the ſame judgement after we have yeelded to it as now we have? and whether we will have the ſame judgement of it in *ſickneſſe* and *death*, and at the day of reckoning as we have for the preſent? That which is of it

ſelf

ſelf evil, is alwaies ſo at one time as well as another; If the time will come, when we ſhall think thoſe things to be vain, which now we are ſo eagerly ſet upon, as if there were ſome great good in them; Why ſhould we not think ſo of them now, when as the reforming of our judgment may do us good: rather then to be led on with a pleaſing errour until that time, wherein the ſight of our errour will fill our hearts with horrour and ſhame, without hope of ever changing our condition? Chap. 13.

Here therefore is a ſpeciall uſe of theſe Soliloquies, to awake the ſoul, and to ſtir up reaſon caſt aſleep by Satans charmes, that ſo ſcattering the *clouds* through which things ſeem otherwiſe than they are, we may diſcern and judge of things according to their true and conſtant nature. Demand of thy ſoul, Shall I alwaies be of this mind? Will not the time come when this will prove bitterneſſe in the end? Shall I redeem a ſhort contentment with laſting ſorrow? Is my Judge of my minde? Will not a time come when all things ſhall appear as they are? Is this according to the rule, &c?

To

Chap. 13. Divers principles of mans actions.

To conclude therefore, whereas there be divers *principles* of mens actions, as 1. *Natural inclination*, inclining us to some courses more than others: 2. *Custome*, which is *another nature* in us: 3. *Imagination*, apprehending things upon shallow grounds; from whence springs *affectation*, whereby we desire glory in things above our own strength and measure, and make shew of that, the truth whereof is wanting in us. 4. *True judgement*, discerning the true reasons of things. 5. *Faith*, which is a spiritual *principle* planted in the soul, apprehending things above reason, and raising us up to conceive of all things as God hath discovered them. Now a sound Christian should not be lightly led with those first *common grounds* of natural *inclination*, *custome*, *opinion*, &c. but by judgement enlightned, advanced, and guided by faith. And we must take heed we suffer not things to passe suddenly from imagination to affection, without asking advice of our *judgement*, and *faith* in the way, whose office is to weigh things in Gods *ballance*, and thereupon to accept or refuse them.

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CHAP.

Chap. 14.

CHAP. XIV.

Of help by others. Of true comforters, and their graces. Method. Ill successe.

§. 1.

BUt because we are subject to favour and flatter our selves, it is wisedom to take the benefit of a second self (that is) a well chosen friend, *living* or *dead*, (Books I mean) which will speak truly without flattery of our estates. *A friend is made for the time of Adversity*, and *two* are better then one; for by this means our troubles are *divided*, and so more easily born. The very presence of a true-hearted friend yields often ease to our grief: of all friends, those that by office are to speak a word to a weary soul, are most to be regarded, as speaking to us in Christs stead. Oftentimes (especially in our own case) we are blinded and benighted with *passion*, and then the judgement of a friend is clearer. Loving friends have a threefold priviledge: 1. Their advice is *seasonable*, and fit to our present occasion, they can meet with our grievance, so cannot books so well: 2. What comes from a living friend, comes *lively*, as helped by his spirit:

There is a help for us against troubles in others. Pro. 17. 17.

1.

2.

Chap. 14. 3.

ſpirit. 3. In regard of our ſelves, what they ſay is apprehended with more eaſe, and leſſe plodding and bent of minde; There is ſcarce any thing wherein we ſee God more in favour towards us, than in our *friends*, and their ſeaſonable ſpeeches; our hearts beiug naturally very falſe and willingly deceived. God often gives us up to be miſled by men *not* according to *his*, but *our own* naughty hearts. As men are, ſo are their *Counſellors*, for ſuch they will have, and ſuch God lets them have. Men whoſe wils are ſtronger then their wits, who are wedded to their own waies, are more pleaſed to hear that which complies with their *inclinations*, than a harſh truth which croſſes them; this preſages ruine, becauſe they are not *counſellable*: wherefore God ſuffers them to be led through a *fools paradiſe* to a true *priſon*, as men that will neither hear themſelves nor others who would do them good againſt their wils; It was a ſigne God would deſtroy *Elies ſonnes* when they would hear no counſell; God fils ſuch men with their *own waies*. Men in great place often in the abundance of all things elſe, want the benefit of a *true friend*, be-

1 *Sam.* 2. 25
Pro. 14. 14.
Ideo amicus deeſt quia nihil deeſt.

cauſe

cauſe under preteuce of *ſervice* of them men carry their *own ends*; as they flatter *themſelves*, ſo they are flattered by *others*, and ſo robbed of the true judgement of themſelves. Of all ſpirituall judgements this is the heavieſt, for men to be given up to ſuch a meaſure of *ſelf-wilneſs*, and to refuſe ſpiritual *balme* to heal them, uſually ſuch *periſh without remedy*, becauſe to be *wilfully* miſerable is to be *doubly* miſerable, for it adds to our miſery, that we brought it *willingly* upon our ſelves. Chap. 14. Pro. 29. 1.

It is a courſe that will have a bleſſing attending it, for *friends* to joyn in league one to watch over another; and obſerve each others waies. It is an uſuall courſe for Chriſtians to joyn together in other holy duties, as *hearing*, *receiving* of the *Sacrament*, *Prayer*, &c. but this fruit of holy *communion* which ariſeth from a *mutuall* obſerving one another is much wanting; whence it is that many *droop*, ſo many are ſo *unchearful* in the waies of God, and lie groaning under the *burden* of many *cares*, and are battered with ſo many temptations, *&c.* becauſe they are left only to their *own* ſpirits. What an unworthy thing is it, that we ſhould pity a

beaſt

Chap. 14.

beast over-loaden, and yet take no pity of a *brother*? whereas there is no living member of Christ but hath *spirituall love* infused into him, and some *ability* to comfort others. Dead stones in an *Arch* uphold one another, and shall not *living*? It is the work of an *Angel* to *comfort*, nay, it is the office of the *Holy Ghost* to be a *Comforter*, not only immediatly, but by breathing comfort into our *hearts* together with the comfortable *words* of others; thus one friend becomes an *Angel*, nay, a *God* to *another*; and there is a sweet sight of God in the face of a *friend*; for though the comfort given by Gods *Messengers* be ordinarily most effectual, as the blessing of Parents (who are in Gods room) is more effectuall than the blessing of others upon their children: yet God hath promised a blessing to the offices of *Communion of Saints* performed by one private man towards another. Can we have a greater encouragement than under God to be gainer of a soul, which is as much in Gods esteem as if we should gain a world? *Spirituall* almes are the *best* almes; *mercy* shewed to the *souls* of men is the *greatest mercy*; and wisedom in winnin

winning of *ſouls* is the greateſt wiſedom in the world, becauſe the ſoul is eſpecially the man, upon the goodneſſe of which, the happineſſe of the *whole man* depends: What ſhining and flouriſhing Chriſtians ſhould we have if theſe duties were performed? As we have a portion in the *Communion of Saints*, ſo we ſhould labour to have *humility* to take good, and *wiſedome* and *love* to do good. A Chriſtian ſhould have *feeding* lips, and a *healing* tongue; the *leaves*, the very words *of the tree of righteouſneſſe* have a curing virtue in them.

Some will ſhew a great deal of *humanity* in comforting others, but little *Chriſtianity*; for as *kinde men* they will utter ſome *cheerfull words*, but as Chriſtians they want wiſedom from above to ſpeak a gracious *word in ſeaſon*: Nay, ſome there are, who hinder the ſaving working of any affliction upon the hearts of others, by unſeaſonable and *unſavoury* diſcourſes, either by ſuggeſting falſe *remedies*, or elſe diverting men to falſe *contentments*, and ſo become ſpirituall *traytors* rather than *friends*, taking part with their worſt *enemies*, their *luſts*, and *wils*. Happy is he that

in

Chap. 14.

in his *way* to heaven meeteth with a cheerfull and skilful *guide* and *fellow-traveller*, that carrieth *cordials* with him against all faintings of spirit: It is a part of our *wisdome to salvation* to make choice of such a one as may further us in our way: An *indifferency* for any *company* shews a *dead* heart; where the life of grace is, it is sensible of all advantages and disadvantages: How many have been refreshed by one short, apt, savoury speech? which hath begotten, as it were, new spirits in them.

In ancient times (as we see in the story of *Job*) it was the custome of friends to meet together, to comfort those that were in misery, and *Job* takes it for granted, that *to him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friends*: for besides the presence of a friend which hath some influence of comfort in it; 1. The discovery of his *loving affection* hath a cherishing sweetnesse in it. 2. The expression of love in reall comforts and services by supplying any outward want of the party troubled, prevails much; thus Christ made way for his comforts to the *souls* of men, by shewing outward kindnesse to their *bodies*: *Love* with the sensible *fruits* of it,

Job 2.12.

Job 6.14.

1.

2.

prepareth

prepareth for any wholeſome counſel. 3. After this, *wholſome words* carry a ſpecial cordial vertue with them, eſpecially when the Spirit of God in the affectionat ſpeaker joyns with the *word* of *comfort*, and thereby cloſeth with the heart of a troubled patient: when all theſe concenter and meet together in one, then is comfort *ſealed* up to the ſoul. The childe in *Elizabeths* womb ſprang at the preſence and ſalutation of *Mary*; the ſpeech of one hearty friend cannot but revive the ſpirits of another; Sympathy hath a ſtrange force, as we ſee in the ſtrings of an Inſtrument, which being played upon (as they ſay) the ſtrings of another inſtrument are alſo moved with it. After love hath once *kindled* love, then the heart being melted, is fit to receive any impreſſion; unleſſe *both* pieces of the iron be read hot they will not joyn together; two ſpirits warmed with the *ſame heat* will eaſily ſolder together.

Chap. 14. 3.

Luk. 1. 41.

§. 2.

In him that ſhall ſtay the minde of another there had need to be an excellent *temper* of many graces; as, 1. *Knowledge* of the grievance, together with *wiſdom* to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon, and to conceal

Graces neceſſary in dealing with another.

1.

Chap. 14. that which may set the cure backwards.
2. 2. *Faithfulnesse* with *liberty*, not to conceal any thing which may be for his good, though against present liking. The very life and soul of *friendship* stands in *freedom*, tempered with wisdom and faithfulnesse.
3. 3. *Love* with compassion and patience *to bear all*, and *hope all*, and *not to be easily provoked* by the waywardnesse of him we deal with. Short-spirited men are not the best comforters: God himself is said to *bear with the manners of his people in the wildernesse*: It is one thing to *bear* with a wise sweet *moderation* that which may be *born*, and another thing to *allow* or approve that which is not to be *approved* at all. Where these graces are in the *speaker*, and apprehended so to be by the person *distempered*, his heart will soon embrace whatsoever shall be spoken to rectifie his judgement or affection. A good conceit of the *spirit* of the speaker is of as much force to prevail as his *words*. Words especially prevail, when they are uttered more from the *bowels* than the *brain*, and from our own *experience*, which made even Christ himself a more compassionate *high Priest*. When men come to themselves

1 Cor. 13. 6 Act. 13. 18. Τροποφορεῖν. *Non est idem ferre, si quid ferendum est, & probare, si quid probandum non est.*

selves again, they will be the deepest censurers of their own miscariage.

§. 3.

Moreover to the right comforting of an afflicted person, special care must be had of discerning the true *ground* of his grievance, the *core* must be searched out; if the grief ariseth from outward causes, then it must be carried into the right chanel, the course of it must be turned another way, as in staying of *blood*; we should grieve for sin in the first place, as being the evil of all evils: If the ground be *sin*, then it must be drawn to a head, from a confused grief to some more particular sin, that so we may strike the right vein; but if we finde the spirit much cast down for particular sins, then comfort is presently to be applied; But if the grief be not fully ripe, then, as we use to *help* nature in its offers to purge, by *Physick*, till the sick matter be carried away; so when *conscience*, moved by the *spirit*, begins to ease it self by *confession*, it is good to help forward the work of it, till we finde the heart low enough for comfort to be laid upon. When *Paul* found the *Jaylor* cast down almost as low as hell, he stands not

Further directions.

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Chap. 14.

now upon further hammering, and preparing of him for mercy, (that work was done already) but presently stirs him up to *beleeve in the Lord Jesus Christ*; here being a fit place for an interpreter to declare unto man *his* righteousnesse, and *his* mercy that belongs unto him after he hath acknowledged *his* personal and *particular* sins, which the natural guil of the heart is extreamly backward to do, and yet cannot receive any sound peace till it be done: If signes of grace be discerned, here likewise is a fit place to declare unto man the saving work of grace in his heart, which Satan labours to hide from him. Men oft are not able to read their own evidences without help.

Act. 16. 31.

In case of stifnesse and standing out, it is fit the man of God should take some *authority* upon him, and lay a charge upon the souls of men in the name of Christ, to give way to the truth of Christ, and to forbear putting off that mercy which is so kindly offered when we judge it to be their portion; which course will be successful in hearts *awed* with a reverend fear of *grieving Gods Spirit*. Somtimes men must be dealt roundly withal, as *David* here

here deals with his own ſoul, that ſo whilſt we aſk a reaſon of their dejection, they may plainly ſee they have no reaſon to be ſo caſt down; for oftentimes *grievances* are irrational, riſing from *miſtakes*; and *counſel*, bringing into the ſoul a *freſh light*, diſſolves thoſe groſſe *fogs*, and ſetteth the ſoul at *liberty*. What grief is contracted by falſe reaſon, is by true reaſon altered. Thus it pleaſeth God to humble men by letting them ſee in what need they ſtand one of another, that ſo the communion of Saints may be indeared; every relation wherein we ſtand towards others, are ſo many bonds and ſinewes whereby one *member* is fitted to derive comfort to another, *through love the bond of perfection*: All muſt be done in this ſweet *affection*. A member out of joynt muſt be tenderly ſet in again, and bound up, which onely men guided by the ſpirit of love ſeaſoned with diſcretion are fit to do, they are *taught of God* to do what they ſhould. The more of Chriſt is in any man, the more willingneſſe and fitneſſe to this duty; to which this ſhould encourage us, that in ſtrengthening *others* we ſtrengthen *our ſelves*; and derive upon our ſelves

Chap. 14.

Col. 3. 18.

Chap. 14. Psal. 41. 1.

the *blessing* pronounced on those that consider the *needy*, which will be our comfort here, and crown hereafter, that God hath honoured us, to be *instruments* of spirituall good to others. It is an injunction to *comfort the feeble minded*, and there is an heavy imputation on those that *comforted not the weak*: when men will not *own* men in *trouble*, but as the herd of *Deer* forsake and push away the *wounded* Deer from them: And those that are any waies cast down, must stoop to those waies which God hath sanctified to convey comfort; for though sometimes the Spirit of God immediatly comforts the soul, *which is the sweetest*, yet for the most part the *Sun of righteousnesse* that hath *healing in his wings*, conveyeth the beams of his comfort by the help of *others*, in whom *he* will have much of our comfort to lie hid, and for this very end it pleaseth God to exercise his children (and Ministers especially) with trials and afflictions, that so they having felt what a troubled spirit is in themselves, might be able to comfort others in their distresses with the same comfort wherewith they have been comforted: God often suspends

1 The. 5. 14 Ezc. 34. 4.

Si illatæ molestias lingua dicat, à conscientia dolor emanat, vulnera enim clausa plus cruciant. Greg.

comfort

comfort from us to drive us to make uſe of *our Chriſtian friends*, by whom he purpoſeth to doe us good. Oftentimes the very *opening* of mens grievances, bringeth eaſe without any further working upon them; the very opening of a vein cools the bloud. If God in the ſtate of *innocency* thought it fit man ſhould have a helper, if God thought it fit to ſend an Angel to comfort Chriſt in his agonies, ſhall any man think the comfort of another more than needs? Satan makes every affliction, by reaſon of our corruption, a *temptation* to us, whereupon we are to encounter not only with our own *corruptions*, but with *ſpirituall wickednesſes*, and need we not then that others ſhould joyn forces with us to diſcover the temptation, and to confirm and comfort us againſt it? for ſo *reaſon* joyning with *reaſon*, and *affection* with *affection*, we come by uniting of ſtrength to be impregnable. Satan hath moſt advantage in *ſolitarineſſe*, and thereupon ſets upon Chriſt in the *wilderneſſe*, and upon *Eve* ſingle, and it added to the glory of Chriſts victory, that he *overcame* him in a ſingle combat, and in a place of ſuch diſadvantage. Thoſe that will be

Chap. 14.

Mat. 4. Gen. 3.

Chap. 14. *alone* (at ſuch times) do as much as in them lieth to tempt the *tempter* himſelf to tempt them. The Preacher gives 3.
Eccleſ. 4. 9. Reaſons why *Two are better then One:*
1. 1. Becauſe if one fall, the other may lift him up: as that which is ſtronger ſhoreth up that which is *weaker*, ſo *feeble minds* are raiſed and kept up by the *ſtronger:* Nay, oftentimes he that is weaker in one grace is ſtronger in another; one may help by his *experience* and *meekneſſe of love*, that needs the help of another for
2. *knowledge*. 2. If *two lie together*, one may warm another by *kindling* one anothers *ſpirits*. Where two meet together upon ſuch holy grouds & aimes, there Chriſt by his *Spirit* makes up another, and this thre-foold cable who ſhall break? While *Joas* lived, *Jehoiada* ſtood upright; While *Latymer* and *Ridley* lived, they kept up *Cranmer* by intercourſe of letters and otherwiſe, from entertaining counſels of *Revolt*. The Diſciples preſently upon Chriſts apprehenſion *fainted*, notwithſtanding he laboured by his heavenly doctrine to put courage and comfort into
3. them. 3. If any give an *on-ſet* upon them, there is *two to withſtand it*, *Spirit* joyning with

with *ſpirit*; and becauſe there is an *acquaintance* of ſpirits as well as of perſons, thoſe are fitteſt to lay open our mindes unto, in whom upon experience of their fidelity our hearts may moſt ſafely rely. We loſe much of our ſtrength in the loſs of a true friend; which made *David* bemoan the loſſe of his friend *Jonathan*, *Wo is me for thee my Brother Jonathan!* He loſt a peece of himſelf, by loſing him whom his heart ſo clave unto; S. *Paul* accounted that God had ſhewed eſpeciall mercy to him, in the recovery of *Epaphroditus*.

Chap. 13.

Solatium vitæ, habere cui pectus aperias. Ambroſ.

2 Sam. 1. 20.

Phil. 2. 27.

§. 4.

But there are divers miſcarriages in thoſe that are *troubled*, which make the *comfort* of others of none effect.

Miſcarriages in the party, that needs to be comforted.

1. When the *troubled party* deals not directly, but *doubleth* with him that is to help him. Some are aſhamed to *acknowledge* the true ground of their *grievance*, pretending ſorrow for one thing, when their hearts tell them it ariſeth from another: Like the *Lapwings* which make greateſt noiſe fartheſt from their neaſt, becauſe they would not have it diſcovered: This deceit moved our bleſſed Saviour

1.

Chap. 14. viour (who knew what was in the hearts of men) to fit his *answers* many times, rather to the *man* than to the *matter*.

2. 2. Some rely too much upon particular men, Oh if they had such a one they should do well, and mislike others (fitter perhaps to deal with them, as having more through knowledge of their estates) because they would have their disease rather *covered* than *cured*; or if *cured*, yet with *soft words*, whereas no plaister worketh better than that which causes smart. Some out of meer humorous fondnesse must have that which can hardy be got, or else nothing pleases them: *David* must 2 Sam. 23. 15. needs have the *waters of Bethlehem* when others were nearer hand: And oftentimes when men have not onely whom they desire, but such also who are fit and dexterous in dealing with a troubled spirit, yet their souls feel no comfort, because they make idols of men; Whereas men at the best are but conduits of comfort, and such as God freely conveyeth comfort by, taking liberty oft to deny comfort by them, that so he may be acknowledged the *God of all comfort*.

3. 3. Some delude themselves, by thinking

ing it ſufficient to have a few good words ſpoken to them, as if that could cure them; not regarding to apprehend the ſame, and mingle it with faith, without which, *good words* loſe their working, even as wholſome Phyſick in a dead ſtomack. Chap. 14.

Beſides miſcarriages in comforting; times will often fall out in our lives, that we ſhall have none either to comfort us, or to be comforted by us, and then what will become of us unleſſe we can comfort our ſelves? Men muſt not think alwaies to live upon alms, but lay up ſomething in ſtore for themſelves, and provide oyle for their own lamps, and be able to draw out ſomething from the treaſury of their *own hearts*. We muſt not go to the Surgeon for every ſcratch. No wiſe traveller but will have ſome refreſhing waters about him. Again, we are often driven to retire home to our own hearts, by uncharitable *imputations* of other men; even *friends* ſometimes become *miſerable comforters*; It was *Jobs* caſe, his friends had honeſt intententions to comfort him but erred in their manner of dealing; if he had found no more comfort by reflecting Job 2.

upon

Chap. 14.

upon his own *sincerity*, than he received from them, who laboured to take it from him, he had been doubly miserable. We are most privy to our own intentions and aims, whence comfort must be fetched; Let others speak what they can to us, if our own hearts speak not with them, we shall receive no satisfaction. Sometimes it may fall out, that those which should *untoose* our spirits when they are *bound up*, mistake, the key misses the right wards, and so we lie bound still. Opening of our estate to another is not good, but when it is necessary, and it is not necessary, when we can fetch supply from our *own* store; God would have us tender of our reputations, except in some special cases, wherein we are to *give glory* to God by a free and full confession. Needless discovery of our selves to others, makes us fear the conscience of another man, as privy to that which we are ashamed he should be privy unto, and it is neither *wisedom* nor *mercy* to put men upon the rack of *confession*, further than they can have no ease any other way, for by this means we raise in them a jealousie towards us, and oft without cause; which weakneth

weakneth and tainteth that *love* which should *unite* hearts in *one*. Chap. 15.

CHAP. XV.

Of flying to God in disquiets of souls: Eight observations out of the text.

WHat if neither the speech of others to us, nor the rebuke of our own hearts will quiet the soul; Is there no other remedy left? *Quest.*

Yes, then look up to God, the Father and fountain of comfort, as *David* doth here; For the more special means whereby he sought to rerover himself, was by laying a charge upon his soul to *trust in God*; for having let his soul run out too much, he begins to recollect himself again, and resign up all to God. *Answ.*

But how came *David* to have the command of his own soul, so as to take it off from *grief*, and to place it upon God, could he dispose of his own heart himself? *Quest.*

The childe of God hath something in him above a man, he hath the *Spirit of* *Answ.* 1.

God

Chap. 15.

God to guid his ſpirit: this *command* of *David* to his *ſoul* was under the command of the *great Commander*: God commands *David* to *truſt in him*, and at the ſame time infuſeth ſtrength into his ſoul by thinking of Gods command, and truſting to Gods power, to *command it ſelf* to *truſt in God:* ſo that this *command* is not onely by *authority*, but by *virtue* likewiſe of Gods *command*: As the inferiour orbes move as they are moved by a higher; So *Davids* ſpirit here moves as it is moved by *Gods ſpirit*, which inwardly ſpake to him to ſpeak to himſelf.

David in ſpeaking thus to his own ſoul, was, as every true Chriſtian is, a *Prophet*, and an *inſtructer* to himſelf. It is but as if *inferiour officers* ſhould charge in the name and power of the King. Gods children have a principle of life in them from the Spirit of God, by which they command themſelves. To give charge belongs to a Superiour; *David* had a double ſuperiour above him, his own ſpirit as ſanctified, and Gods ſpirit guiding that. Our ſpirits are the *ſpirits* agents, and the Holy Spirit is Gods agent, maintaining *his* right in us. As God hath made

made man a free agent, *So* he guides him, and preſerves that free manner of working which is agreeable to mans nature. Chap. 15.

By this it appears, that *Davids* moving of himſelf, did not hinder the *Spirits* moving of him, neither did the Spirits moving of him, hinder him from moving himſelf in a free manner; for the *Spirit* of God moveth according to our principles; it openeth our underſtandings to ſee that it is beſt to *truſt in God*; It moveth ſo ſweetly, as if it were an inbred principle, and all one with our *own* ſpirits; If we ſhould hold our will to move it ſelf, and not to be moved by the Spirit, we ſhould make a God of it, whoſe property is to move other things, and not to be moved by any.

We are in ſome ſort *Lords* over our own ſpeeches & actions, but yet, under a *higher Lord*. *David* was willing to truſt in God, but God wrought that *will* in him: he firſt makes our will *good*, and then works by it. It is a ſacrilegious liberty that will acknowledge no dependence upon God. We are wiſe in *his wiſdom*, and ſtrong in *his* ſtrength, who ſaith, *without me ye can do nothing*. But the bud of a good

Ergóne ita liberi eſſe volunt, ut nec Deum volunt habere Dominum? Aug de Spir. & Lit.

John 15.

Chap. 15.

Certum est, nos velle cũ volumus, sed ille facit ut velimus. Aug.

good desire, and the *blossome* of a good resolution, and the fruit of a good action, all comes from God. Indeed the *understanding* is ours whereby we know what to doe, and the *will* is ours whereby we make choice of what is best to be done; but the light whereby we know, and the guidance whereby we choose, that is from a higher agent, which is ready to flow into us with present fresh supply, when by vertue of former strength we put our selves forward in obedience to God. Let but *David* say to his soul being charged of God to trust, I charge thee my soul to trust in him, and he findes a present strength inabling to it. Therfore we must

Duties,

1. both depend upon God as the first Mover, and withall set all the inferior wheels of our souls a going according as the Spirit of God ministers motion unto us. So

2. shall we be free from self-confidence, and likewise from neglecting that order of working which God hath established. *David* hearkened what the Lord said, before he said any thing to *himself*, so should we. Gods Commands tend to this, that we should command our selves. God, and the Minister under God, bid us *trust in him,*

him, but all is to no purpose till grace be wrought in the soul, whereby it bids it self; Our speaking to others doth no good, till they by entertaining what we say, speak the same to their own souls. Chap. 15.

In this charge of *David* upon his own soul, we may see divers passages and privileges of a gracious heart in trouble.

As 1. *That a Christian when he is beaten out of all other comforts, yet hath a God to run unto;* A wicked man beaten out of earthly comforts, is as a naked man in a storm, and an unarmed man in the field, or as a Ship tossed in the sea without an anchor, wch presently dashes upon rocks, or falleth upon quicksands; but a Christian, when he is driven out of all comforts below, nay, when God seems to be angry with him, he can appeal from God *angry* to God *appeased*, he can *wrastle* and strive with God by Gods own strength, *fight* with him with his own weapons, & plead with God by his own *arguments*. What a happy estate is this? who would not be a Christian, if it were but for this, to have something to rely on when all things else fail? The confusion and unquietnesse *Obser.* 1.

Chap. 15. which *troubles* raise in the soul, may drive it from resting in it self, but there can never be any true peace setled, until it sees and resolves *what to stay upon.*

2. 2. We see here, that *there is a sanctified use of all troubles to Gods Children*; first they drive them *out of themselves*, and then draw them nearer to God. Crosses indeed of themselves *estrange* us more from God, but by an over-ruling work of the Spirit they bring us nearer to him; The soul of it self is ready to *misgive*, as if God had too many *controversies* with it, to shew any favour towards it; and Satan helpeth; because he knows nothing can stand and prevail *against God*, or a soul that *relyeth on him*, therefore he labours to *breed* and *encrease* an everlasting *division* betwixt God and the soul; but let not Christians muse so much upon their *trouble*, but see whither it carries them, whether it brings them nearer unto God, or not; It is a never-failing rule of discerning a man to be in the state of grace, *when he findes every condition draw him nearer to God*; for thus it appears that such *love* God, and are *called of him*, unto whom

whom *all things worke together for the best.* Chap. 15. Rom. 8. 28.

§ 4.

3. Again, hence we see that the Spirit of God by these *inward speeches* doth awake the soul, and keep it in a holy *exercise*, by stirring up the grace of faith to its proper function. It is not so much the *having* of grace, as grace in *exercise*, that preserves the soul; therefore we should by this and the like means *stir up the grace of God* in us, that so it may be kept a working and in vigour and strength. It was *Davids* manner to *awake* himself, by bidding both *heart* and *harp* to *awake*. It is the waking Christian (that hath his wit and his *grace* ready about him) who is the safe Christian; grace *dormant* without the *exercise* doth not secure us. It is almost all one (in regard of present exigence) for grace not to *be* and not to work. The soul without *action* is like an instrument not played upon, or like a ship alwaies in the Haven. *Motion* is a preservative of the *purity* of things. Even life it self is made more *lively* by action. The Spirit of God whereby his children are led, is compared to things of the quickest and strongest 3.

Chap. 15.

actions; as *fire* and *winde*, &c. God himself is a pure *act*, alwaies in *acting*; and every thing the nearer it comes to God, the more it hath its *perfection* in working. The happinesse of man consists chiefly in a gracious frame of spirit, and *actions* suitable sweetly issuing therefrom: the very rest of heavenly bodies is in *motion* in their proper places. By this stirring up the *grace* of God in us, sparkles come to be flames, and all graces are kept bright. Troubles stir up *David*, and *David* being stirred stirs up himself.

§. 5.

4. 4. We see likewise here a *further use of Soliloquies* or *speeches to our own hearts*; when the soul by entring into it self sees it self put out of order; then it enjoyns this duty of *trusting in God* upon it: if we look only on our selves and not turn to God, the work of the soul is imperfect: *then* the soul worketh as it should, when as by reflecting on it self, it gathers some *profitable* conclusion, and leaveth it self with God. *David* upon reflecting on *himself* found nothing but *discouragement*, but when he looks upward to God, there he findes *rest*. This is one end why God suffers

ſuffers the ſoul to tire and beat it ſelf, that finding no reſt in it ſelf, it might ſeek to him. *David* yeelds not ſo much to his *paſſion* as that it ſhould keep him from God. Therefore let no man truly *religious* pretend (for an excuſe) his *temper* or provoking occaſions, *&c.* for grace doth raiſe the ſoul above nature; Grace doth not only ſtop the ſoul in an evil way, but carries it to a contrary good, and raiſeth it up to God. Though holy men be ſubject to *like paſſions with others* (as it is ſaid of *Elias*) yet they are not ſo inthralled to them, as that they carry them wholly away from their God, but they hear a voice of the Spirit within them, calling them back again to their former *communion* with God; and ſo *grace* takes occaſion (even from *ſin*) to exerciſe it ſelf. Chap. 15. Jam. 5. 17.

§. 6.

5. Obſerve further, that *diſtruſt is the cauſe of all diſquiet:* the ſoul ſuffers it ſelf by ſomething here below to be drawn away from God, but can finde no reſt till it return to him again. As *Noahs Dove* had no place to ſet her *foot upon*, till it was received into the Ark from whence it came. And it is Gods mercy to us, that 5. Gen. 8. 11.

Chap. 15.

when we have let go our hold of God, we ſhould finde nothing but trouble and unquietneſſe in any thing elſe, that ſo we might remember from whence we are *fallen* and return home again. That is a good trouble wch frees us from the greateſt trouble, and brings with it the moſt comfortable reſt; It is but an unquiet *quiet*, and a reſtleſſe *reſt* which is out of God. It is a deep ſpiritual judgement for a man to finde too much reſt in the creature: The ſoul that hath had a ſaving work apon it, will be alwaies impatient until it recover its former ſweetneſſe in God: After Gods Spirit hath once touched the ſoul, it will never be quiet until it ſtands pointed God-ward.

Queſt. But conſcience may object, *Upon any offence is God offended*, and therefore not to be *truſted?*

Anſw. Truſt in God, though an offended God.

It is true, where *faith* is not above *naturall conſcience*. but a conſcience *ſprinkled with the bloud of Chriſt*, is not ſcared from God by its infirmities and failings, but as *David* here, is rather ſtirred up to run unto God by his *diſtemper*; and it had been a greater ſinne than his diſtemper not to have gone unto God. Thoſe that have the

ſpirit

ſpirit of *ſons* in their hearts, run not further from God after they have a little *ſtrayed from him*, but though it be the nature of ſinfull *paſſions* to breed grief and ſhame, yet they will repair to God again, and their *confidence* overcomes their *guilt*, So well are they acquainted with Gods gracious diſpoſition. Chap. 15.

Yet we ſee here, *David* thinks not of *truſting in God*, till firſt he had done juſtice upon his own ſoul, in rebuking the *unruly* motions thereof; *Cenſure* for ſinne goeth before *favour* in pardoning ſinne, or *boldneſſe* to ask pardon of God; thoſe that *love God* muſt *hate ill*: If our *conſciences* condemn us of allowing any ſin, we cannot have *boldneſs with God* who is (light and can abide no darkneſs and) *greater than our conſciences*. Pſa. 97.10.

§. 7.

6. Moreover, hence we ſee *it is no eaſie thing to bring God and the heart together*: *David* here as he often *checks* his heart, ſo he doth often *change* his heart. Doubts and troubles are ſtill gathering upon him, and his faith ſtill gathering upon them. As one ſtriving to get the haven, is driven back by the waves, but recovering 6.

Chap. 13.

himselfe againe, gets forward still, and after often beating back, at length obtaines the wished haven, and then is at rest. So much adoe there is to bring the soule unto God, the harbour of true comfort. It were an easie thing to be a Christian, if Religion stood onely in a few outward works and duties, but to take the soule to taske, and to deale roundly with our owne hearts, and to let conscience have its full work, and to bring the soule into spirituall subjection unto God; this is not so easie a matter, because the soul out of self-love is loath to enter into it selfe, lest it should have other thoughts of it selfe then it would have; *David* must bid his soule trust, and trust, and trust again before it will yeeld. One main ground of this difficulty, is that contrary which is in the soule by reason of contrary principles: The soul so far as it is gracious, commands, so far as it is rebellious, resists, which drew holy *Austin* to a kinde of astonishmeet; "*The soul commands the body and it yeelds.* "(saith he) *it commands it selfe, and is* "*resisted by it selfe*; it commands the "hand to move, and it moveth with such "an

Unde hoc monstrum, & quare istud? Aug. Confes.

Chap. 15.

"an unperceivable quickneſſe that you "can diſcern no diſtance betwixt the "command and the motion: Whence "comes this? but becauſe the ſoul per- "fectly wils not, and perfectly enjoyns "not that which is good, and ſo farre "forth as it fully wils not, ſo far it holds "back. There ſhould be no need of commanding the ſoul if it were perfect, for then it would be of it ſelf, what it now commandeth. If *David* had gotten his ſoul at perfect freedome at the firſt, he needed not have repeated his charge ſo often upon it. But the ſoul naturally ſinks downward, and therefore had need often to be wound up.

Non ex toto vult, non ex toto imperat, in tantum non fit quod imperat, in quantum non vult.

Q. 8.

7. We ſhould therefore labour to bring our ſouls (as *David* doth here) to a firm and peremptory reſolution, and not ſtand wavering and as it were equally ballanced betwixt God and other things; but enforce our ſouls, we ſhall get little ground of infidelity elſe, drive your ſouls therefore to this iſſue, either to rely upon God, or elſe to yeeld up it ſelf to the preſent grievance; if by yeelding it reſolves to be miſerable, there's an end, but

7.

Chap. 15.

but if it desires *rest*, then let it resolve upon this only way, to trust in God; and well may the soul so resolve, because in God there are grounds of quieting the soul, above all that may unsettle it; In him there is both *worth* to satisfie, and *strength* to support the soul. The best way to maintain inward peace, is to settle and fix our thoughts upon that which will make us better, till we find our hearts warmed and wrought upon thereby, and then (as the Prophet speaks) *God will keep us in peace: peace*, that is, *in perfect and abundant peace.* This resolution stayed *Job*, that *though God should kill him*, yet he resolved *to trust in him.* Answerable to our resolution is our peace: the more *resolution* the more *peace*, *Irresolution* of it self without any grievance is full of *disquiet*; It is an unsafe thing alwaies to begin to live; to be alwaies cheapning and paltering with God: Come to this point once, *Trust God* I ought, therefore *trust God* I will, come what may or will.

Isa. 26. 3.

And it is good to renew our resolutions again and again: for every new resolution brings the soul closer to God, and gets further in him, and brings fresh

strength

Chap. 19.

ſtrength from him; which if we neglect, our corruption joyning with outward hindrances will carry us further and further backward, and this will double, yea multiply our trouble and grief to recover our ſelves again; we have both winde and tide againſt us: We are going up the hill, and therefore had need to arm our ſelves with reſolution. Since the fall, the motion of the ſoul *upward* (as of heavy bodies) is violent; in regard of corruption which weighs it *downward*, and therefore all enforcement is little enough: Oppoſe therefore with *David* all *invincible* reſolution, and then doubt not of prevailing; If we reſolve in Gods power and not our own, and be *ſtrong* in the Lord, and not in our ſelves, than it matters not what our troubles or temptations be either from within, or without, for *truſt in God* at length will triumph. Eph. 6. 10.

Here is a great mercy, that when *David* had (a little) let go his hold of God, yet God would not let go his hold of him, but by a ſpirit of faith draws him back again to himſelf; God *turns us* unto him, and then we return. *Turn us again* (faith the Pſalmiſt) *cauſe thy face to ſhine upon us*, Pſa. 80. 19.

and

Chap. 15.

and we ſhall be ſaved. When the ſoul leaves God once, it loſes its way, and it ſelf; and never returns till God recals it again. If morall principles cheriſhed and ſtrengthened by good education, will enable the ſoul againſt vicious inclinations, ſo that though ſome influence of the heavens work upon the air, and the air upon the ſpirits, and the ſpirits upon the humors, and theſe incline the temper, and that inclines the ſoul of a man ſuch & ſuch waies, yet *breeding* in the refined-er ſort of civill perſons, will much prevail to draw them another way; What then may we think of this powerfull grace of faith which is altogether ſupernaturall? Will not this carry the ſoul above all natural inclinations whatſoever (though ſtrengthened by outward occaſions) if we reſolve to put it to it: *David* was a King of other men, but here he ſhews that he was a King of himſelfe; What benefit is it for a man to be Ruler over all the world, and yet remain a *ſlave* to himſelf?

Animus ager ſemper errat.

8. 8. Again, *David* here doth not only *reſolve*, but *preſently takes up his ſoul before*

Chap. 15.

before it ſtrayed too faire from God; the further and the longer the ſoul wanders from God, the more it intangles it ſelf, and the thicker darkneſſe will cover the ſoul, yea, the loather it is to come to God again, being aſhamed to look God in the face after diſcontinuing of *acquaintance* with him; Nay, the ſtronger the league grows betwixt ſinne and the ſoul, and the more there groweth a kind of ſutableneſſe betwixt the ſoul and ſin; Too long *giving way to baſe* thoughts and affections, diſcovers too much complacency and *liking* of ſinne. If we once give way, a *little* grief will turn into bitter ſorrow, and that into a *ſetled* penſiveneſſe and *heavineſs of ſpirit*, *fear* will grow into *aſtoniſhment*, and *diſcouragement* into *deſpair*; If ever we mean to truſt God, Why not now? How many are taken away in their offers and aſſaies, before they have prepared their hearts to cleave unto God? The ſooner we give up our ſelves to the Lord, the ſooner we know upon what terms we ſtand, and the ſooner we provide for our beſt ſecurity, and have not our grounds of comfort to ſeek when we ſhall ſtand moſt in need of

Chap. 15.

of them. *Time* will salve up grief in the meanest of men, *Reason* in those that will suffer themselves to be ruled thereby, will cure (or at least stay the fits of it) sooner: but *Faith* if we stirre it up, will give our souls no rest, until it hath brought us to our true rest (that is) to God: therefore we should press the heart forward to God presently, that Satan make not the rent greater.

Lastly, here we see, that *though the soul be overborne by passion for a time, yet if grace hath once truly seasoned it, it will work it self into freedome again*; grace as oyle will be above. The eye when any dust fals into it, is not more tender and unquiet, till it be wrought out again, then a gracious soul is being once troubled: the *spirit* as a *spring* will be cleansing of it self more and more; whereas the heart of a carnall man is like a standing pool, whatsoever is cast into it, there it rests; trouble and disquietnes in him are in their proper place; it is proper for the Sea to rage and cast up dirt; God hath set it down for an eternal rule, that * *vexation* and *sinne* shall be inseparable. Happines and rest were severed from sin in heaven when the Angels fell, and in Paradise

* *Jussisti Domine & sic est, ut omnis inordinatus affectus sibi sit pœna.* Aug.

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CHAP. XVI.

Of truſt in God: grounds of it; eſpecially his providence.

BUt to come nearer to the unfolding of this *truſting in God*, which *David* uſeth here as a remedy againſt all diſtempers. Howſoever confidence and truſt be an *affection* of nature, yet by the Spirits ſanctifying and carrying it to the *right object*, it becomes a *grace* of wonderful uſe. In the things of *this life* uſually he that *hopes moſt* is the moſt unwiſe man; he being moſt deceived that hopes moſt, becauſe he truſts in that which is uncertain, and therefore deceitful hope is counted but the dream of a waking man. But in *Religion* it is far otherwiſe, here, hope is the main ſupporting grace of the ſoul, ſpringing from faith in the *Promiſes* of God.

Truſt and hope are often taken in the ſame ſenſe, though a diſtinction betwixt them

Chap. 15.

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Chap. 16.

them hath sometimes its use: *faith* looks to the word promising, hope to the thing promised in the word; faith looks to the *authority* of the *promiser*, hope (especially) to the goodnesse of the promise; *faith* looks upon things as present, *hope* as to come hereafter. God as the *first truth* is that which faith relyes on, but God as the chief *good* is that which hope rests on: *Trust* or *confidence* is nothing else, but the strength of *hope*; if the thing hoped for be *deferred*, then of necessity it enforces *waiting*, and waiting is nothing else but hope and trust lengthened.

However there may be use of these and such like distinctions, yet usually they are taken promiscuously, especially in the Old Testament. The nature and use of faith is set out by terms of *staying*, *resting*, *leaning*, *rolling our selves upon God*, &c. which come all to one, and therefore we forbear any further curious distinction.

God and the Soul must be brought together by trust.

Now seeing *trusting in God* is a remedy against all distempers, it is necessary that we should bring the *object* and the *act* (God and the Soul) together; for effecting of which, it is good to know some-

thing

thing concerning God, and ſomething concerning truſt. God is onely the fit object of truſt, he hath all the properties of that which ſhould be truſted on; A man can be in no condition wherein God is at a loſſe and cannot help him; if comforts be wanting, he can create comforts, not only out of nothing, but out of diſcomforts; He made the Whale that ſwallowed up *Jonas*, a means to bring him to the Shore: The Sea was a Wall to the Iſraelites on both ſides: The devouring flames were a great refreſhing to *the three children in the fiery furnace*; that trouble which we think will ſwallow us up, may be a means to bring us to our haven; *So mighty is God in power, and ſo excellent in working.* God then, and God onely is a fit foundation for the ſoul to build it ſelfe upon, for the former the foundation is, the ſtronger will the building be, therefore thoſe that will build high muſt dig deep: the higher the tree riſeth, the deeper the root ſpreadeth and faſtneth it ſelfe below. So it is in faith, if the foundation thereof be not firme, the ſoul cannot build it ſelf ſtrongly upon it; Faith hath a double *principle* to

Chap. 16.

Jona. 1.17.

Dan. 3.

Eſa. 28.29.

Chap. 16.

build on, either a principle of *being*, or a principle of *knowing*; the principle of *being* is *God himself*, the principle of *knowing* is *Gods word*, whereby God cometh forth (*out of that hidden light which none can attain unto*) and discovereth his meaning towards us for our good.

1. This then must 1. be supposed for a ground, *that there is a God*, and *that* God *is* (that is) hath a full and eternall *being*, and giveth a *Being*, and an order of Being, to all things else; some things have only a being, some things life and being, some things *sense*, &c. and some things have a more *excellent being*, including all the former, as the being of creatures indued with reason; If God had not a Being, nothing else could be: In things subordinate one to another, take away the first, and you take away all the rest: therefore this proposition (*God is*) is the first truth of all, and if this were not, nothing else should be: as we see if the heavenly bodies doe not move, there is no motion here below.

2. 2. In the divine nature or being, there is a subsisting of three Persons, every one to set out unto us, as fitted for us to *trust in*;

in; the *Father* as a *Creator*, the *Sonne* as a *Redeemer*, the *holy Ghost* as a *Comforter*, and all this in reference to us: God in the first person hath decreed the great work of our salvation, and all things tending to the accomplishment of it; God in the *second person* hath exactly and fully *answered* that decree and plot, in the work of our *redemption*; God in the *third person* discovers & applies all unto us, and fits us for communion with the Father and the Sonne from whom he proceeds. Chap. 16.

3. GOD cannot be comfortably thought upon out of Christ our *Mediator*, in whom he was *reconciling the world to himself*, as being a friend both to God and us, and therefore fit to bring God and the soul together, being a middle person in the Trinity; In Christ Gods nature becomes lovely to *us*, and *ours* to God: otherwise there is an utter enmity betwixt his pure and our impure nature: Christ hath made up the vaste gulf between God and us; there is nothing more terrible to think on, than an absolute God out of Christ. 3. 1 Cor. 5. 19.

4. Therefore for the better drawing of us to trust in *God*, we must *conceive* of *him* 4.

Chap. 15. under the ſweet relation of a *Father*; Gods nature is *Fatherly* now unto us, and therefore *lovely*.

5. 5. And for further ſtrengthening our faith, it is needful to conſider what excellencies the Scripture giveth unto God, anſwerable to all our neceſſities; what ſweet *Names God* is pleaſed to be known unto us by for our comfort, *as a mercifull, gracious, longſuffering God*, &c.

Exo. 34. 6. When *Moſes* deſired to ſee the glory of God, God thus manifeſted himſelf, in the way of goodneſs, *I will make all my goodneſſe paſſe before thee.*

Exo. 33. 16 Whatſoever is good in the *creature* is *firſt* in God as a fountain; and it is in God in a more *eminent* manner and *fuller* meaſure. All grace and holineſſe, all ſweetneſſe of affection, all power and wiſdome, &c. as it is in him, ſo it is from him, and we come to conceive theſe properties to be in God, 1. by feeling the comfort and power of them in our ſelves;

1. 2. by obſerving theſe things in their meaſure to be in the beſt of the creatures, whence we ariſe to take notice of what grace and what love, what ſtrength and wiſdome &c. is in God, by the beames

2. of

of these which we see in his creature, with adding in our thoughts *fulnesse* peculiar to God, and abstracting *imperfection*, incident to the creature; for that is in God in the highest degree, the sparkles whereof it is but in us. Chap. 16.

6. Therefore it is fit that unto all other *eminencies* in God, we should strengthen our faith by considering those glorious *singularities*, which are altogether *incommunicable* to the creature, and which give strength to his other properties, as that God is not only *gracious* and *loving*, *powerful*, *wise*, &c. but that he is infinitely, eternally, and unchangeably so. All which are comprised *in* and drawn *from* that one name *Jehovah*, as being of *himself*, and giving a being to *all* things else, *of nothing*; and able when it pleaseth him to turn all things to nothing again. 6.

7. As God is thus, so he makes it good by answerable *actions* and *dealing* towards us, by his continual *providence*; the consideration whereof is a great stay to our faith, for by this providence God makes use of all his former excellencies for his peoples good; for the more comfortable apprehension of which, it is good 7. What *God is*, he maketh good by *providence*.

Chap. 10.

to know that Gods *providence* is extended as far as his creation. Every creature (in every Element and place whatsoever) receiveth a powerful influence from God, who doth what pleaseth him, both in *Heaven and Earth, in the Sea, and all places*; But we must know, God doth not put things into a frame, and then leave them to their own motion as we doe *Clocks*, after we have once set them right, and *Ships* after we have once built them, commit them to winde and waves; but as he made all things, and knows all things, so (by a continued kind of creation) he preserves all things in their being and working, and governes them to their ends: He is the first mover that sets all the wheels of the creature a working: One wheel may move another, but all are moved by the first. If God moves not, the clock of the creature stands. If God should not uphold things, they would presently fall (to nothing) from whence they came. If God should not guide things, Satans malice, and mans weakneſſe, would soon bring all to a confusion. If God did not rule the great family of the world, all would break and fall to peeces,

peeces, whereas the wiſe providence of God keepeth every thing on its right hinges. All things ſtand in obedience to this providence of God, and nothing can withdraw it ſelf from under it; If the creature withdraw it ſelf from one order of Providence, it falls into another; If man (the moſt unruly & diſordered creature of all) withdraw himſelf from Gods gracious government of him to *happineſſe*, he will ſoon fall under Gods juſt government of him to deſerved miſery; If he ſhakes off Gods ſweet yoke, he puts himſelfe under Satans heavy yoke, who (as Gods Executioner) hardens him to deſtruction; and ſo whilſt he ruſhes againſt Gods will, he fullfils it. And whilſt he will not willingly do Gods will, Gods will is done upon him againſt his will. Chap. 16.

The moſt caſuall things fall under *providence*, yea (the moſt diſordered thing in the world (ſinne) and (of ſinnes the moſt horrible that ever the Sun beheld) *the crucifying of the Lord of life*, was guided by a hand of *providence* to the greateſt good. For that which is *caſuall* in regard of a *ſecond cauſe*, is not ſo in regard

Chap. 16. of the first, whose *providence* is most cleerely seen in casuall events that fall out by *accident*, for in these the *effect* cannot be ascribed to the next *cause*, God

Deut. 19.5. is said to kill him, who was unwarily slain by the falling of an *axe* or some *instrument* of death.

And though man hath a freedome in working, and (of all men) the hearts of

Prov. 21.1. *Kings* are most free, yet even these are *guided by an over-ruling power*, as the rivers of water are carried in their channels, whither skilful men list to derive them.

For selting of our faith the more, God taketh liberty in using weake meanes to great purposes, and setting aside more *likely* and *able* means, yea, sometimes he altogether disableth the greatest meanes, and worketh often by no means at all. It is not for want of power in God but from abundance and multiplying of his goodnesse, that he useth any means at all: there is nothing that he doth by means, but he is able to doe without means.

Nay, God often bringeth his will to passe by crossing the course and streame of means, to shew his own soveraignty, and to exercise our dependence; and maketh

keth his very enemies, the accompliſhers of his own will, and ſo, to bring about that which they oppoſe moſt. Hence it is that we believe under hope againſt hope. Chap. 16. Pſa. 135.6.

But wee muſt know, Gods manner of *guiding* things is without prejudice of the proper working of the things themſelves; he guideth them ſweetly according to the *inſtincts* he hath put into them; for,

1. He furniſhes *creatures* with a vertue and power to work, and likewiſe with a manner of working ſutable to their own nature, as it is proper for a man (when he works) to work with *freedome*, and other creatures by natural inſtinct, &c. 1.

2. God maintaineth both the power and manner of working, and perfecteth and accompliſheth the ſame by acting of it, being neerer to us in all we doe, than we are to our ſelves. 2. *Intimior intimo noſtro.* 3. He applies and ſtirrs up our abilities and actions, to this or that particular, as hee ſeeth beſt. 3. 4. He ſuſpends or removes the hinderances of all actions, and ſo, powerfully, wiſely, and ſweetly orders them to his own ends. When any evil is intended, God either puts bars and letts to the execution 4.

Chap. 16.

ecution of it, or elſe limiteth and boundeth the ſame, both in regard of time and meaſure, ſo that our enemies either ſhall not do the evil at all, or elſe not ſo long a time, or not in ſuch a height of miſchief, as their malice would carry them to: *The rod of the wicked* may light *upon the back of the righteous*, but it ſhall *not reſt* there. God knows how to take our enemies off, ſometimes by changing, or ſtopping their wils, by offering conſiderations of ſome good or ill, danger or profit to them; ſomtimes by taking away, and weakning all their ſtrength, or elſe by oppoſing an equall or greater ſtrength againſt it. All the ſtrength our enemies have reſts in God: who if he denies concourſe and influence the *arm* of their power (as *Jeroboams* when he ſtretcht it out againſt the Prophet) ſhrinks up preſently.

Pſ. 125. 3.

God is not onely the cauſe of things and actions, but the cauſe likewiſe of the ceſſation of them, why they fall not out at all. God is the cauſe why things are *not*, as well as why they *are*; The cauſe why men favour us not, or (when they doe favour us) want preſent wiſdome and ability to help us, is from Gods withdrawing

Deus eſt prima cauſa cujuſcunq; non eſſe.

Chap. 18.

drawing the concurrence of his light and ſtrength from them. If a skilfull Phyſitain doth us no good, it is becauſe it pleaſeth God to hide the right way of curing at that time from him. Which ſhould move us to ſee God in all that befalls us, who hath ſufficient reaſon, as to *doe* what he doth, ſo *not* to doe what he doth not, to hinder, as well as to give way.

The God of ſpirits hath an influence into the ſpirits of men, into the principles and ſprings of all actions; Otherwiſe he could not ſo certainly foretell things to come. God had a work in *Abſaloms* heart in that he refuſed the beſt *counſell*; there is nothing independent of him, who is the mover of all things, and himſelfe unmoveable.

Nothing ſo *high*, that is above his providence; Nothing ſo *low*, that is beneath it; Nothing ſo large, but is bounded by it; Nothing ſo confuſed, but God can order it; Nothing ſo *bad*, but he can draw good out of it; Nothing ſo wiſely plotted, but God can diſappoint it, as *Achitophels* counſell; Nothing ſo ſimply and unpolitickly carried, but he can give a prevailing iſſue unto it; Nothing ſo freely

Chap. 16.

freely carried, in regard of the next cauſe, but God can make it neceſſary in regard of the event; Nothing ſo natural, but he can ſuſpend it in regard of operation, as heavy bodies from ſinking, fire from burning, &c.

It cannot but bring ſtrong ſecurity to the ſoule, to know that in all variety of changes and intercourſe of good and bad events, *God* and *Our* God, hath ſuch a diſpoſing hand. Whatſoever befalls us, all ſerves to bring Gods *electing* love, and our *glorification* together, Gods *providence* ſerveth his *purpoſe* to ſave us. All *ſufferings*, all *bleſſings*, all *ordinances*, all *graces*, all *common gifts*, nay, our very *falls*, yea, *Satan* himſelfe with all his *inſtruments*, as over-maſtered, and ruled by God, have this injunction upon them to further Gods good intendment to us, and a prohibition to doe us no harme. *Auguſtus* taxed the world for civill ends, but Gods providence uſed this as a meanes for Chriſt to be born at *Bethlehem*. *Ahaſhueroſh* could not *ſleepe*, and thereupon calls for the *Chronicles*, the reading of which occaſioned the *Jews* delivery. God oft diſpoſeth little occaſions, to great

Esther 6.1.

great purposes. And by those very waies whereby proud men have gone about to withstand Gods counsells, they have fulfilled them, as we see in the story of *Joseph* and *Moses, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, He was above them.*

Chap. 17. *Divinum consilium dum devitatur, impletur; humana sapientia dum reluctatur, comprehenditur.* Greg. Ex. 10, 11.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Graces to be exercised in respect of Divine providence.

WE are under a *providence* that is above our own; which should be a ground unto us, of exercising those graces that tend to settle the soule in all events. As,

1. Hence to lay our hand upon our mouthes, and command the soul an holy silence, not daring to yeeld to the least rising of our hearts against God. *I was dumbe, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it*, saith *David*. Thus *Aaron* when he had lost his two sonnes, both at once, and that by fire, and by fire from *heaven*, wch carried an evidence of Gods great displeasure with it, yet *held his peace*. In this *silence* and *hope* is *our strength*. Flesh

Psal. 39. 9.

Lev. 10. 1, 2

Chap. 17.

Fleſh and blood is prone to expoſtulate with God & to queſtion his dealing, as we ſee in *Gideon*, *Jeremy*, *Aſaph*, *Habakkuk*, and others, *If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* but after ſome ſtrugling between the *fleſh* and the *ſpirit* the concluſion wil be, *yet* howſoever matters goe *God is good to Iſrael.* Where a fearful ſpirit, and a melancholy temper, a weak judgment, and a ſcrupulous and raw conſcience meet in one, there *Satan* and *his*, together with mens *owne hearts*, which like *Sophiſters* are continually cavilling againſt themſelves, breed much diſquiet, and makes the life uncomfortable. Such therefore ſhould have a ſpeciall care as to grow in knowledge, ſo to ſtick cloſe to ſure and certain grounds, and bring their conſciences to the rule. Darkneſſe cauſeth fears. The more light, the more confidence. When we yeeld up our ſelves to God, we ſhould reſolve upon *quietneſſe*, and if the heart ſtirres, preſently uſe this check of *David*, *Why art thou diſquieted?*

Pſal. 73. 1.

Gods waies ſeem oft to us full of contradictions, becauſe his courſe is to bring things to paſſe by contrary means. There

is

is a myſtery not only in Gods *decree* concerning mans eternall eſtate, but likewiſe in his *providence*, as why hee ſhould deale unequally with men, otherwiſe equal. His judgments are a great depth, which we cannot ſadome, but they will ſwallow up our thoughts and underſtandings. God oft wraps himſelfin a cloud, and will not be ſeen till afterward. Where we cannot trace him, we ought with *S. Paul* to *admire* and *adore* him. When we are in heaven, it will be one part of our happineſſe, to ſee the harmony of thoſe things, that ſeeme now confuſed unto us. All Gods dealings will appeare beautifull in their due ſeaſons, though we for the preſent ſee not the contiguity and linking together of one thing with another. Chap. 17.

2. hence likewiſe proceeds a holy reſining of our ſelves to God, *who doth all things according to the counſell of his owne will.* His *will* is a wiſe will, it is guided by *counſell*, a ſoveraign prevailing will. The onely way to have our *will* is to bring it to Gods will. *If we could delight in him, we ſhould have our hearts deſire.* Thus *David* yeelds up himſelfe to God; 2.

Voluntas Dei neceſſitatis rei.

Here

Chap. 17. 2 Sam. 15. 26. *Here I am, let the Lord deale with me as seemeth good unto him.* And thus *Eli*, when God foretold by *Samuel* the ruine of his house, quiets himselfe, *It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good.* Thus our blessed *Saviour* stayes himselfe, *Not my will, but thy will be done.* And thus the people of God, when *Paul* was resolved to goe to *Jerusalem*, submitted, saying, *The will of the Lord be done*; a speech fit to proceed out of the heart and mouth of a Christian.

1 Sam. 3. 18

Act 21. 14. *vox verè Christianorum.*

We may desire and long after a change of our condition, when we look upon the grievance it self, but yet remember still that it be with reservation, when we look upon the *will of God*, as, *How long Lord, holy and true, &c.* Out of inferiour reasons we may with our Saviour desire a removeall of the *cup*; but when we look to the supreme reason of reasons, the *will of God*, here we must stoop and kisse the rod. *Thus humbling our selves under his mighty hand*, which by murmuring and fretting we may make more heavy, but not take off, still adding new guilt and pulling on new judgements.

Rev. 6. 10.

3. the way patiently to suffer Gods will

will, is to inure our ſelves firſt to doe it. *Paſſive* obedience ſprings from *active*. He that endures any thing, will endure it quietly, when he knows it is the will of God, and conſiders that whatever befals him, comes from his good pleaſure. Thoſe that have not inured themſelves to the yoke of *obedience*, will never endure the yoke of *ſuffering*, they fume and rage *as a wilde Bore in a net*, as the Prophet ſpeaks. It is worth the conſidering, to ſee two men of equal parts under the ſame croſſe, how quietly and calmly the one that eſtabliſheth his ſoul on Chriſt, will bear his afflictions, whereas the other rageth as a fool, and is more beaten.

Chap. 17.

Nothing ſhould diſpleaſe us, that pleaſeth God; neither ſhould any thing be pleaſing to us that diſpleaſeth him. This conformity is the ground of comfort. Our own will takes away God, as much as in it lies. *If we acknowledge God in all our wayes, he will direct our paths, and leade us the way that we ſhould go.* The quarrell betwixt God and us is taken up, when *his* will and our will are one; when we have ſacrificed our ſelves, and our wils unto God; when, as he is higheſt in himſelfe,

Propria voluntas Deum quantum in ipſa eximit. Prov. 3. 6. Eſa. 48. 18.

Chap. 17.

ſo his will hath the higheſt place in our hearts. We find by experience, that when our wills are ſo ſubdued, that we delight *to doe*, what God would have us doe, and *to be* what *God* would have us be, that then ſweet peace preſently riſeth to the ſoul.

When we can ſay, Lord, if thou wilt have me poor and diſgraced, I am content to be ſo: if thou wilt have me ſerve thee in this condition I am in, I will gladly doe ſo. It is enough to me that *thou* wouldeſt have it ſo. I deſire to yeeld readily, humbly, and cheerefully, to thy diſpoſing *providence*. Thus a Godly man ſaies *Amen* to Gods *Amen*, and puts his *fiat* and *placet* to Gods. As the *Sea* turns all rivers into its own reliſh; ſo he turns all to his own ſpirit, & makes whatſoever befalls him, an exerciſe of ſome vertue. A *Heathen* could ſay, that calamities did rule over men, but a wiſe man hath a ſpirit overruling all calamities; much more a *Chriſtian*. For a man to be in this eſtate, is to enjoy heaven *in the world* under heaven; Gods *Kingdome comes* where *his will is thus done* and ſuffered.

None feele more ſweet experience of Gods *providence*, then thoſe that are moſt

most resolute in their obedience. After we have given glory to God in relying upon his *wisdome*, *power*, and *truth*, we shall finde him imploying *these* for our direction, assistance, and bringing about of things to our desired issue, yea, above what ever we looked for, or thought of. Chap. 17.

In all cases that fall out, or that we can put to our selves, as in case of *extremity*, *apposition*, *strange accidents*, *desertion* and *damps of spirit*, &c. here we may take *Sanctuary*, that we are in covenant with him, who sits at the sterne and rules all, and hath commited the government of all things to his *Son*, our *Brother*, our *Joseph* the *second person* in heaven. We may be sure no hurt shall befall us, that he can hinder; and what cannot he hinder *that hath the keyes of hell and of death?* unto whom we are so neere, that he carries *our names in his breast, and on his shoulders*, as the *high priest* did those of *the twelve tribes*. Though his *Church* seems a *widow* neglected, yet he will make the world know that she hath a *Husband* will right her in his good time.

But it may be demanded, What course is to be taken for guidance of our lives in particular

Chap. 17.

ticular actions, wherin doubts may arise what is most agreeable to the will of God?

Answ.

1. We must not put all carelesly upon a providence, but first consider what is our part, and so farre as God prevents us with light, and affords us helps and means, we must not be failing in our duty. We should neither out-runne, nor be wanting to *providence*. But in perplexed cases, where the reasons on both sides seem to be equally ballanced, see whether part make more for the main end, the glory of God, the *service of others*, and advancement of *our own spirituall good*. Some things are so clear and even, that there is not a *best* between them, but one may be done as well as the other, as when two wayes equally tend to one and the same place.

Summa ratio quæ pro religione facit.

2. We are *not our own*, and therefore must not set up our selves. We must not consult with flesh and bloud either in our selves or others, for self-love will deprave all our actions, by setting before us corrupt ends. It considers not what is best, but what is safest. By-respects sway the ballance the wrong way.

2.

3. When things are clear, and Gods will

3.

will is manifeſt, further *deliberation* is dangerous, and for the moſt part argues a falſe heart; as we ſee in *Balaam*, who though he knew Gods minde, yet would be ſtill conſulting, till God in judgement gave him up to what his *covetous* heart led him unto. A man is not fit to deliberate till his heart be purged of falſe aims; for elſe God will give him to the darkneſſe of his own ſpirit, and he will be alwaies warping, unfit for any byaſſe. Where the aymes are good, there God delighteth to reveal his good pleaſure. Such a ſoul is levell and ſuitable to any good counſell that ſhall be given, and prepared to entertain it. In what meaſure any luſt is favoured, in that meaſure the ſoul is darkened. Even *wiſe Solomon*, whileſt he gave way to his luſt, had like to have loſt his wiſedom.

We muſt look to our place wherein God hath ſet us; if we be in ſubjection to others, their authority ought to ſway with us. Neither is it the calling of thoſe that are ſubjects, to enquire overcurioufly into the *myſteries* of government; for *that*, both in peace and warre, breeds much diſturbance, and would trouble all deſigns.

Chap. 17.

The laws under which we live, are particular determinations of the law of God in ſome duties of the *ſecond table*. For example; The Law of God ſaies, *Exact no more then what is thy due*. But what in particular is thy due, and what *another* mans, the laws of men determine, and therefore ought to be a rule unto us ſo farre as they reach; though it be too narrow a rule to be good *onely* ſo farre as mans laws guide unto. Yet *law* being the joynt reaſon & conſent of many men for publick good, hath an uſe for guidance of all actions that fall under the ſame. Where it daſhes not againſt Gods law, what is agreeable to *law* is agreeable to *conſcience*.

Nimis anguſta innocentia eſt, ad legem bonum eſſe.

The law of God in the due enlargment of it, to the leaſt beginning and occaſions is exceeding broad, and allows of whatſoever ſtands with the light of reaſon, or the bonds of humanity, civility, &c. and whatſoever is againſt theſe, is *ſo farre* againſt Gods law. So that higher rules be looked to in the firſt place, there is nothing lovely, or praiſe-worthy among men, but ought to be ſeriouſly thought on.

Nature of it ſelfe is wild and untamed, and

and impatient of the yoke; but as beasts that cannot endure the yoke at first, after they are inured a while unto it beare it willingly, and carry their worke more easily by it? So the yoke of obedience, makes the life regular and quiet. The meeting of authority and obedience together maintains the order and peace of the world. Chap. 17.

So of that question.

Though blindfold obedience, such as our *Adversaries* would have, be such as will never stand with sound peace of conscience, which alwaies lookes to have light to direct it; (for else a blinde conscience would breed blinde fears) yet in such doubtful cases wherein wee cannot winde out our selves, we ought to light our candles at others; whom wee have cause to think by their *place* and *parts* should see further then we. In matters of outward estate, we will have men skilfull, of our counsell; and Christians would finde more sound peace, if they would advise with their godly & learned Pastors and friends. Where there is not a direct word, there is place for the counsell of a prudent man. And it is a happinesse 5. *Sententia boni viri.*

Chap. 17.

pineſſe for them whoſe *buſineſs* is much, and *parts* not large, to have the benefit of thoſe that can give aim, and ſee further than themſelves The meaneſt Chriſtian underſtands his own way, and knows how to do things with better advantage to his ſoul, than a graceleſſe though learned man; yet is ſtill glad of further diſcovery. In *counſell* there is peace, *the thoughts* being thus *eſtabliſhed*.

When we have adviſed and ſerved Gods *providence* in the uſe of means, then if it fall out otherwiſe then we look for, we may confidently conclude, that God would not have it ſo, otherwiſe to our grief we may ſay, it was the fruit of our own raſhneſſe.

Where we have cauſe to think that we have uſed better meanes in the ſearch of grounds, and are more free from partial affections then others, there we may uſe our own adviſe more ſafely. Otherwiſe what we do by conſent from others, is more ſecure and leſſe offenſive, as being more countenanced.

In advice with others, it is not ſufficient to be generally wiſe, but experienced and knowing in that we ask, which is an honour

honour to Gods gifts where we find them in any kinde. When we ſet about things in *paſſion*; we work not as men or Chriſtians, but in a beſtiall manner. The more paſſion, the leſſe diſcretion; becauſe paſſion hinders the ſight of what is to be done. It clouds the ſoul, and puts it on to action without adviſement. Where paſſions are ſubdued, and the ſoul purged and cleared, there is nothing to hinder the impreſſion of Gods Spirit; the ſoul is fitted as a clean glaſſe to receive light from above. And that is the reaſon why *mortified men* are *fitteſt* to adviſe with in the particular caſes incident to a Chriſtian life. Chap. 17.

6. After all advice, extract what is fitteſt; and what our ſpirits do moſt bend unto: For in things that concerne our ſelves, God affords a light to diſcerne out of what is ſpoken, what beſt ſuteth us. And every man is to follow moſt what his own conſcience (after information) dictates unto him; becauſe conſcience is Gods deputy in us, and under God moſt to be regarded, and whoſoever ſinnes againſt it, in his own Conſtruction ſins againſt God. God vouchſafeth every Chriſtian

Chap. 17.

Christian in some degree, the grace of *spiritual prudence*, whereby they are enabled to discerne what is fittest to be done in things that fall within their compasse.

7. It is good to observe the particular becks of providence, how things joyne and meet together: Fit occasions and suting of things are intimations of Gods will. *Providence* hath a language, which is well understood by those that have a familiar acquaintance with Gods dealing, they see a train of providence, leading one way more than to another.

8. Take especial heed of not grieving the Spirit, when hee offers to be our guide, by studying evasions, and wishing the case were otherwise. This is to be Law-givers to our selves, thinking that we are wiser than God, The use of discretion is not to direct us about the end, whether we should doe well or ill, (for a single heart alwaies aymes at good:) but when we resolve upon doing well, and yet doubt of the manner how to perform it, discretion looks not so much to what is lawful, (for that is taken for granted,) but what is most expedient. A discreet man looks not to what is *best*, so much as what is *fittest* in such

Chap. 17.

ſuch and ſuch reſpects, by eying circumſtances, which if they ſort not, doe vary the nature of the thing it ſelf.

And becauſe it is not in man to know his own waies, we ſhould look up unto *Chriſt* the great *Counſellour* of his *Church*, to vouchſafe the ſpirit of counſell and direction to us; that may *make our way plain before us*, by ſuggeſting unto us, *this is the way, walk in it.* We owe God this reſpect, to depend upon him for direction in the *particular* paſſages of our lives, in regard that he is our *Soveraign*, and his will is the *rule*, and we are to be accountable to him as our *Judge*. It is God only that can ſee through buſineſſes, and all helps and lets that ſtand about.

After we have rolled our ſelves upon God, we ſhould immediatly take that courſe he inclines our hearts unto, without further diſtracting fear. Otherwiſe it is a ſigne we *commit not our way to him*, when we doe not quietly *truſt him*, but remain ſtill as thoughtful, as if we did not truſt him. After *prayer* and *truſt* follows *the peace of God*, and a heart void of further dividing care. We ſhould therefore preſently queſtion our hearts, for queſtioning

Phil. 2:4.

Chap. 17.

stioning his *care*, and not regard what *fear* will be ready to suggest, for that is apt to raise conclusions against our selves, out of self-conceited grounds, whereby we usurp upon God, and wrong our selves.

Dan. 3.

It was a good resolution of the three young men in *Daniel*, *We are not carefull to answer thee O King*. We know our duty, let God doe with us as he pleaseth. If *Abraham* had hearkened to the voice of nature, he would never have resolved to sacrifice *Isaac*, but because he cast himself upon Gods providing, God in the *Mount* provided a *Ram* in stead of his *Son*.

CHAP. XVIII.

Other grounds of trusting in God: namely the Promises. And twelve directions about the same.

§. 1.

There must be a discovery of the minde of God, as well as of his nature.

BUt for the better setling of *our trust in God*, a further discovery is necessary than of the *nature* and *providence* of God; for though the *nature* of God be written in the book of the *Creatures* in so great letters, as he that runs may reade; and though

though the providence of God appears in the order and use of things: yet there is *another book* whereby to know the will of God towards *us*, and our duty towards *him*: We must therefore have a knowledge of the *promises* of God, as well as of his *providence* for though God hath discovered himself most graciously in Christ unto us, yet had we not a word of *promise*, we could not have the boldnesse to build upon Christ *himselfe*; therefore from the same grounds (*that there is a God*) there must be a revealing of the will of God, for else we can never have any firme *trust in him* further than he offers himself to be *trusted*; Therefore hath God opened his heart to us in his *word*, and reached out so many sweet *promises* for us to lay hold on, and stooped so low, (by gracious *condescending* mixed with *authority*) as to enter into a covenant with us to perform all things for our good: for *promises* are (as it were the stay of the soul in an *imperfect* condition, and so is *faith* in them untill all *promises* shall end in *performance*, and *faith* in *sight*, and *hope* in *possession*. Chap. 18.

Now these promises are 1. for their *spring* from whence they proceed, *free* 1.

engage-

Chap. 18. *engagements of God*; for if he had not
2. bound himself, who could? and 2. they
3. are for their value *precious*; and 3. for their *extent* large, even of all things that con-
4. duce to happiness; and 4. for their *vertue* quickning and strengthning the soul, as coming from the love of God, and conveying that love unto us by his *Spirit* in the best fruits thereof; and 5. for their
5. *certainty*, they are as sure as the Love of God in Christ is, upon which they are
Rom. 8. 39. founded, and from which *nothing can separate us*. For all promises are either Christ himself (*the promised seed*) or else they are of good things made to us *in him* and *for him*, and accomplished for his sake; they are all made *first* to him as *heir of the promise*, as *Angel of the Covenant*, as *head* of his body, and as our Elder Brother, *&c.* for *promises* being the fruits of Gods love and Gods love being founded first on Christ, it must needs follow that all the promises are both made, and made good to us in and through him, who is *yesterday and to day, and for ever the same*.
Heb. 13. 8.

That we should not call Gods love
1. into question, he not only gives us his
2. *word*, but a binding word, *his promise*; and

and not onely a *naked promiſe*, but hath entred into *Covenant* with us, founded upon full ſatisfaction by the bloud of Chriſt, and unto this Covenant *ſealed by the bloud of the Lord Jeſus*, he hath added the *ſeals* of *Sacraments*, and unto this he hath added his *Oath*, that there might be no place left of doubting to the diſtruſtful heart of man; there is no way of ſecuring *promiſes* amongſt men, but God hath taken the ſame to *himſelf*, and all to this end that we might not onely know his minde towards us, but be fully perſwaded of it, that as verily as he lives, he will make good whatever he hath promiſed for the comfort of his Children. What greater aſſurance can there be, than for being it ſelf to lay his being to pawn? and for life it ſelf to lay life to pawn, and all to comfort a poor ſoul?

Chap. 18. 3. 4. 5.

The boundleſſe and reſtleſſe deſire of mans ſpirit will never be ſtayed without ſome diſcovery of the *chief good*, and the way to attain the ſame: men would have been in darkneſs about their finall condition, and the way to pleaſe God, and to pacifie and purge their conſciences, had not the Word of God ſet down

Chap. 18.

down the ſpring and cauſe of all evill, together with the cure of it, and directed us how to have communion with God, and to raiſe our ſelves above all the evill which we meet withall betwixt us and happineſs, and to make us every way *wiſe to ſalvation.* Hence it is that the *Pſalmiſt* prefers the manifeſtation of God by his *word*, before the manifeſtation of him in his moſt glorious *works*.

Pſal. 19. 7.

And thus wee ſee the neceſſity of a double principle for faith to rely on: 1. *God*, and 2. *the word of God* revealing his will unto us, and directing us to make uſe of all his *Attributes*, *Relations*, and *providence* for our good; and this *word* hath its ſtrength from him who gives a being and an accompliſhment unto it; for *words* are as the Authority of *him* that uttereth them is; When we look upon a *Grant* in the word of a *King*, it ſtayes our mindes, becauſe we know he is able to make it good; and why ſhould it not ſatisfie our ſoules to look upon *promiſes* in the word of a *God?* whoſe words, as they come from his *truth* and expreſſe his *goodneſſe*, ſo they are all made good by his *power* and *wiſdome*.

By

Chap. 18.

By the bare word of God it is that the heavens continue, and the earth (without any other foundation) hangs in the midſt of the world, therefore well may the ſoul ſtay it ſelf on that, even when it hath nothing elſe in ſight to rely upon; By his word it is that the *covenant* of *day* and *night*, and the preſervation of the world from any further *overflowing of waters* continueth; which if it ſhould fail, yet his covenant with his people ſhall abide firm for ever, though the whole frame of nature were diſſolved.

Truſt muſt anſwer the truth of God.

When we have *thus* gotten a fit foundation for the ſoul to lay it ſelfe upon, our next care muſt be (by *truſting*) to build on the ſame; All our miſery is either in having a falſe *foundation*, or elſe in *looſe building* upon a true; therefore having ſo ſtrong a ground as Gods *Nature*, his providence, his *promiſe*, &c. to build upon, the only way for eſtabliſhing our ſouls is (*by truſt*) to rely firmly on him.

Why faith ſo requiſite in Chriſtians.

Now the reaſon why *Truſt* is ſo much required, is becauſe 1. it *emptieth* the ſoul, and 2. by emptying enlargeth it, and 3. ſeaſoneth and fitteth the ſoul to joyn

1.

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3.

Chap. 18. 4. with so gracious an object, and 4. filleth it by carrying it out of it self unto God, who presently (so soon as he is trusted in) conveys himself and his goodnesse to the soul; and thus we come to have the comfort, and God the glory of all his excellencies. Thus salvation comes to be sure unto us, whilest *faith* looking to the *promises* (and to God freely offering grace therein) resigns up it self to God, making no further question from any unworthinesse of its own.

And thus we return to God by *cleaving* to him, from whom we fell by *distrust*, living under a *New Covenant* meerly of *grace*; Jer 31,3. And no *grace* fitter than that which gives all to Christ, considering the fountain of all our good is (out of our selves) *in him*, it being safest for us (who were so ill husbands at the first) that it should be so, therefore it is fit we should have use of such a grace that will carry us out of our selves to the spring head.

The way then whereby faith quieteth the soul, is by raising it *above* all discontentments and storms here below, and pitching it upon God, thereby uniting it

to

to him, whence it draws *vertue* to oppose and bring under whatsoever troubles its peace. For the soul is made for God, and never findes rest till it returns to him againe; when God and the soule meet, there will follow contentment; God (simply considered) is not all our happinesse, but God as *trusted in*; and Christ as we are made *one with him*; The soule cannot so much as *touch* the *hemme* of *Christs garment*, but it shall finde *vertue comming from him* to sanctifie and settle it; God in Christ is full of all that is good; when the soule is *emptied*, *enlarged* and *opened* by faith to receive goodnesse offered, there must needs follow sweet satisfaction. Chap. 18. Mat. 9. 20.

§. 2.

For the better strengthning of our *trust* it is not sufficient that we trust *in God* and his *truth* revealed, but we must doe it by *light* and *strength* from him: Many believe in the truth by *humane* arguments, but no arguments will convince the soule but such as are fetched from the *inward* nature, and *powerfull* worke of truth it selfe; No man can know God, but by God; None can know the *Sunne*, but by its

Directions about trusting.

1. It must be by divine light.

Chap. 18.

its one light; None can know the truth of God (so as to build upon it) but by the truth *it self* and the *Spirit* revealing it by its *own light* to the soul; that soul which hath felt the power of truth in casting it down, and raising it up again, will easily be brought to *rest* upon it; It is neither education, nor the authority of *others* that profess the same *truth*, or that we have been so taught by men of *great parts*, &c. will settle the heart; until we finde an inward *power* and *authority* in the *truth it self* shining in our hearts by its *own* beams; hence comes uasetledneſſe in time of *troubles*, because we have not a *spirituall discerning* of spirituall things. Supernatural truths must have a supernatural power to apprehend them, therefore God createth a spiritual *eye* and *hand* of the soul which is *faith*.

In those that are truly converted, all *saving truths* are transcribed out of the *Scripture* into their hearts, *they are taught of God*; So as they finde all truths both concerning the *sinfull estate*, and the gracious aud *happy estate* of man *in themselves*; they carry a *divinity* in them aud about them, so as from a saving *feeling*

Isa. 54. 13.

they

they can ſpeak of *converſion*, of *ſin*, of *grace*, and the *comforts of the Spirit*, &c. and from this acquaintance are ready to yeeld and give up themſelves *to truth* revealed and to *God* ſpeaking by it. *Truſt* is never found but upon a ſpiritual *conviction* of the truth and goodneſſe we rely upon, for the effecting of which the Spirit of God muſt likewiſe *ſubdue* the *rebellion* and *malice* of our *will*, that ſo it may be ſutable and levell to *divine* things, and reliſh them as they are; we muſt apprehend the *love of God* and the *fruits of it* as better then life it ſelf, and then chooſing and *cleaving* to the ſame will ſoon follow; for as there is a fitneſſe in *divine truths* to all the neceſſities of the ſoul, ſo the Soul muſt be fitted by them to ſavour ond apply them to it ſelf; and then from an harmony between the ſoul and that which it applyes it ſelf unto, there will follow not only peace in the ſoul, but *joy* and *delight* ſurpaſſing any contentment in the world beſides. Chap. 18.

2. By ſubduing and changing the will.

As there is in God to ſatisfie the whole ſoul, ſo *truſt* carries the whole ſoul to God; this makes *truſt* not ſo eaſie a matter, becauſe there muſt be an exercise of

3. By carrying the whole ſoul to God.

Chap. 18.

every faculty of the ſoul or elſe our truſt is imperfect and lame, there muſt bee a *knowledge of him* whom we truſt, and why we truſt an *affiance* and *love*, &c. Onely *they that know God will truſt in him*; not that knowledge alone is ſufficient, but becauſe the ſweetneſſe of Gods love is let into the ſoul thereby, which draweth the whole ſoul to *him*; We are bidden to *truſt perfectly in God*; therefore ſeeing we have a God ſo *full of perfection* to truſt in; wee ſhould labour to truſt perfectly in him.

4. By putting caſes to our ſelves.

And it is good for the exerciſe of *truſt* to put *caſes* to our ſelves of things that probably may fall out, and then returne to our ſoules to ſearch what ſtrength we have if ſuch things ſhould come to paſſe; thus *David* puts caſes; *perfect faith* dares put the hardeſt caſes to its ſoul, and then ſet God againſt *all* that may befall it.

Pſa.3.6. Pſa.46.3. Pſa.27.3.

5. By fitting the promiſe to every condition of our lives

Again, labour to fit the *promiſe* to every condition thou art in; there is no *condition*, but hath a *promiſe ſutable*; therefore no condition but wherin God may be *truſted*, becauſe his *truth* and *goodneſs* is alwayes *the ſame*; And in the promiſe, look both to the good *promiſed*, and to the faithfulneſſe

neſſe and love of the promiſer; It is not good to looke upon the *difficulty* of the thing we have a promiſe againſt, but who promiſeth it, and for whoſe ſake, & ſo ſee all good things *in Chriſt* made over to us.

6. By truſting in God alone.

We ſhould labour likewiſe for a *ſingle heart* to truſt in God *onely*; there is no readier way to fall than to truſt *equally* to two ſtayes, whereof *one* is rotten, and the *other* ſound; therefore as in point of *doctrine* we are to rely upon Chriſt *onely*, and to make the Scriptures our rule *only*; ſo in life and *converſation*, what ever we make uſe of, yet we ſhould *enjoy* and rely *upon God onely*; for either God is truſted *alone*, or not at all; thoſe that truſt to other things *with God*, truſt not *him* but upon *pretence* to carry their *double mindes* with leſſe check.

7. Again, labour that thy ſoul may anſwer all the *Relations* wherein it ſtands to God, by *cleaving* to him, 1. as a *Father* by truſting on his care, 2. as a *Teacher* by following his direction, 3. as a *Creator* by dependence on him, 4. as a *Husband* by inſeparable affection of love to him, 5. as a *Lord* by obedience, &c. And then we may with comfort expect whatſoever

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Chap. 18.

good these *Relations* can yeeld; All which *God* regarding more our wants and weaknesses, than *his own* greatnesse, hath taken upon him. Shall these *Relations* yield comfort from the *creature*, and not from God *himself*, in whom they are in their highest perfection? Shall God make other *fathers* and *husbands* faithful, and not be faithfull himself? All our comfort depends upon labouring to make these *Relations* good to our souls.

8. And as we must *wholly* and *only* trust in God, so likewise we must trust him in all conditions and times, for all things that we stand in need of, until that time comes, wherein we shall stand in need of nothing: for as the same care of God moved him to save us, and to *preserve us* in the world till we be put in possession of salvation; So the same faith relies upon God for heaven and all necessary *provision* till we come thither; It is the office of *Faith* to quiet our souls in all the necessities of this life, and we have continuall use of trusting while we are here: For even when we have things, yet God still keepes the blessing of them in his owne hands, to hold us in a continuall dependance

dance upon him: God trains us up this way, by exercising our trust in lesser matters, to fit us for greater; thus it pleaseth God to keep us in a depending condition until he see his own time; but so good is God that as he intends to give us what we *wait* for, so will he give us the grace and spirit of faith, to sustain our souls in waiting till we enjoy the same. The unrulinesse of a *naturall* spirit is never discovered more, than when God *deferres*, therefore we should labour the more not to withdraw our attendance from God.

9. Further, we must know that the condition of a Christian in this life, is *not to see* what he trusts God for (*he lives by faith, and not by sight*) and yet that there is such a vertue in *faith*, which makes *evident* and present, things to come and *unseen*: Because God where he gives an *eye* of faith, gives also a glasse of the *word* to see things *in* and by seeing of them in the *truth* and *power* of him that *promiseth*, they become *present*, not only to the *understanding* to apprehend them, but to the *will* to rest upon them, and to the *affections* to joy in them: It is the nature of *faith* to

Chap. 18.

to worke, when it *seeth nothing*, and oftentimes best of all *then*, because God shews himself more clearly in his *power*, *wisdome* and *goodnesse*, at such times; and so his glory shines most, and faith hath nothing else to looke upon then, whereupon it gathers all the forces of the soule together, to fasten upon God.

Why God suffers his children to fall into great extremities.

It should therefore be the chiefe care of a Christian to strengthen his *faith*, that so it may answer Gods manner of dealing with him in the worst times; for God usually (1. that he might perfectly mortifie our confidence in the creature, and 2. that he might the more *indeare* his *favours* and make them *fresh* and new unto us, and 3. that the *glory* of deliverance may be intirely *his*, without the creatures sharing with him, and 4. that our *faith* and *obedience* may be *tryed* to the uttermost, and discovered) suffers his children to fall into great *extremities* before he will reach forth his hand to helpe them, as in *Jobs* case, &c. Therefore Christians should much labour their hearts to *trust* in God in the *deepest extremities* that may befall them, even when *no light* of comfort *appeares* either

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4.

Christians should trust God most in the worst times.

from

from *within* or *without*, yea then (especially) when all other comforts fail; *despair* is oft the ground of *hope*; when the darknes of the night is thickest, then the morning begins to dawn; that which (to a man unacquainted with Gods dealings) is a ground of utter *despaire*, the same (to a man acquainted with the wayes of God) is a rise of exceeding *comfort*; for *infinite* power & goodnes can never be at a loss, neither can faith which looks to *that*, ever be at a stand, whence it is that both *God* and *Faith* worke best alone; in a hopelesse estate a Christian will see some *doore of hope* opened, 1. becaus God shewes himselfe neerest to us, when wee stand most in need of him; *Helpe Lord, for vain is the helpe of man:* God is never more seen than in the *Mount*; He *knowes our souls best*, and our souls know him best *in adversity*; *then* he is most *wonderfull in his Saints*. 2. Becaus our prayers *then* are (*strong cries*) fervent and frequent; God is sure to hear of us at such a time, which pleaseth him well, as delighting to heare the *voice* of his *Beloved*.

Chap. 18.

Isa. 50. 10.

1.

Psa. 31. 7.

2.

* 10. By calling to minde former experiences of Gods love.

* For our better incouragement in these sad times, and to help our *trust* in God the

Chap. 18.

the more, we ſhould often call to minde the former *experiences*, which either our *ſelves* or *others* have had of Gods goodneſſe, and make uſe of the ſame for our ſpirituall good; *Our Fathers truſted in thee*, (ſaith the head of the Church) *and were not confounded*; Gods *truth* and *goodneſſe* is unchangeable, *he never leaves thoſe that truſt in him*; ſo likewiſe in our own experiences, we ſhould take notice of Gods dealings with us in ſundry kindes; how many wayes he hath refreſhed us, and how good we have found him in our worſt times; After we have once tryed *him* and *his truth*, we may ſafely truſt him; God will ſtand upon his credit, he never failed any yet, and he will not begin to break with us; If his *nature* and his *word*, and his former dealing hath been ſure and ſquare, why ſhould our hearts be wavering? *thy word* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *is very pure* (or tryed) *therefore thy ſervant loveth it*; the word of God is *as ſilver tryed in the furnace, purified ſeven times*; it is good therefore to obſerve and lay up Gods dealings; Experience is nothing elſe but a multiplyed remembrance of former bleſſings, which will helpe to multiply

multiply our faith; tryed *truth* and tryed *faith* unto it, ſweetly agree and anſwer one another; It were a courſe much tending to the quickning of the faith of Chriſtians, if they would communicate one to another their mutuall experiences; this hath formerly been the cuſtome of Gods people, *Come and heare all ye that feare God, and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoule*; And *David* urgeth this as a reaſon to God for *deliverance*, that then *the Righteous would compaſſe him about*, as rejoycing in the experience of Gods goodneſſe to him; The want of this makes us upon any new triall to call Gods care and love into queſtion, as if he had never formerly been good unto us; whereas every experiment of Gods love ſhould refreſh our faith upon any freſh onſet; God is ſo good to his children even in this world, that he traines them up by daily renewed experiences of his fatherly care; for beſides thoſe many promiſes of good things to come, he gives us ſome evidence and taſte of what we believe *here*; that by that which we *feel* we might be ſtrengthened in that we *looke* for, that ſo in both (1. *ſenſe* of what we feel, and

Chap. 18.2

2. *cer-*

Chap. 18.

11. By walking in the waies of God.

2. *certainty* of what we look for) we might have full ſupport.

But yet we muſt truſt *God*, as he will be truſted, (namely, *in doing good*;) or elſe we doe not truſt him but *tempt him*. Our commanding of our ſoules to truſt in God, is but an *Echo* of what God commands us firſt; and therefore in the ſame manner *he* commands us, we ſhould command *our ſelves*. As God commands us to truſt him in doing good, ſo ſhould we *commit our ſouls to him in well doing*, and truſt him when we are about his *owne works*, and not in the workes of darkneſſe; we may ſafely expect God in his *wayes of mercy*, when we are in his wayes of *obedience*; For *Religion* as it is a doctrine of what is to be *believed*, ſo it is a doctrine according to *godlineſſe*; and the myſteries of *faith* are *myſteries of godlineſſe*, becauſe they cannot be beleeved, but they will inforce a Godly converſation; where any true impreſſion of them is, there is holineſſe alwayes bred in that ſoule; therefore a ſtudy of *holineſſe* muſt goe *jointly* together with a ſtudy of *truſting* in God; *faith* lookes not onely to *promiſes*, but to directions to *duty*, and breeds in the ſoul a liking

liking of whatſoever pleaſeth God; There is a *mutuall* ſtrengthning in things that are good, *truſting* ſtirres to *duty*, and duty *ſtrengthens* truſting by encreaſing our liberty and boldneſſe with God. Chap. 18.

Againe, we muſt maintaine in our ſouls, a *high eſteem* of the grace of *faith*; the very triall whereof is more precious than gold, what then is the grace of faith it ſelf, and the promiſes which it layeth hold on? certainly they tranſcend in *worth* whatever may draw us from God; whence it is that the ſoul ſets a high price upon them, and on faith that beleeves them; It is impoſſible that any thing in the world ſhould come betwixt the heart and *theſe things* (if once we truly lay hold on them) to undermine *faith* or the *comfort* we have by it; the heart is never drawn to any ſinfull *vanity*, or frighted with any terrour of *trouble*, till *faith* firſt loſeth the ſight and eſtimation of divine things, and forgets the neceſſity and *excellency* of them. Our Saviour Chriſt when he would ſtirre up a deſire of *faith* in his Diſciples, ſhewed them the power and excellency of the ſame; *great* things ſtirre up faith, and keep it above, and faith

12. By ſetting a high price upon Faith 1 Pet. 7.

Luk. 17. 6.

Chap. 19.

faith keeps the soule that nothing else can take place of abode in it; when the *great things of God* are brought into the heart by *faith*, what is there in the whole world that can out-bid them? Assurance of these things upon spirituall grounds, overrules both *sense* and *reason*, or whatever else prevails with carnall hearts.

CHAP. XIX.

Faith to be prized, and other things undervalued, at least not to be trusted to as the chief.

THat *faith* may take the better place in the soule and the soule in God, the heart must continually be taught of what *little worth* all things else are, as reputation, riches, and pleasures; *&c.* and to see their *nothingnesse* in the *word* of God, and inexperience of our selves and others, that so our heart being *weaned* from these things, may open it selfe to God, and embrace things of a higher nature; otherwise baser things will be nearer thy soule than faith, and keepe possession against it so that faith will not be suffered to set up a throne

throne in the heart; There muſt be an *unloofing* of the heart, as well as a *faſtning* of it, and God helps us in both: for (beſides the *word* diſcovering the vanity of all things elſe out of God) the main ſcope of Gods dealing with his children in any danger or affliction whatſoever, is to imbitter all other things but *himſelfe* unto them: Indeed it is the power of God *properly* which makes the heart to *truſt*, but yet the Spirit of God uſeth *this way* to bring all things elſe *out of requeſt* with us in compariſon of thoſe ineſtimable good things, which the ſoul is created, redeemed, and ſanctified for; God is very jealous of our truſt, and can endure no *Idol of Jealouſie* to be ſet up in our hearts. Therefore it behooves us to take notice, not only of the deceitfulneſs of things, but of the deceitfulneſſe of our hearts in the uſe of them; Our hearts naturally hang looſe from God, and are ſoon ready to joyn with the creature; Now the more we obſerve our hearts in this, the more we take them off, and labour to ſet them where they ſhould be placed; for the more we *know* theſe things the leſſe we ſhall truſt them. Chap. 19.

Chap. 19. *Object.* But may we not truſt in *riches*, and *friends*, and other outward helps at all?

Anſw. Yes, ſo farre as they are ſubordinate to God our chief ſtay, with reſervation and ſubmiſſion to the Lord; onely ſo far, and ſo long as it ſhall pleaſe him to uſe them for our good. Becauſe God ordinarily conveys his help and goodneſſe to us by ſome creature; we muſt truſt in God to bleſſe evey mercy we enjoy, and to make all helps ſerviceable to his love towards us. In a word, we muſt *truſt* and *uſe* them *in* and *under* God, and ſo as if all were taken away, yet to think God (being *all-ſufficient*) can do without them, whatſoever he doth by them for our good. *Faith* preſerves the *chaſtity* of the ſoul, and cleaving to God is a ſpirituall debt which it oweth to him, whereas cleaving to the *creature* is ſpiritual *adultery*.

It is an errour in the *foundation* to ſubſtitute *falſe objects* either in *Religion*, or in Chriſtian *Converſation*; for 1. in *Religion* truſting in falſe objects, as Saints, and works, *&c.* breeds falſe *worſhip*, and falſe worſhip breeds *Idolatry*, and ſo Gods *jealouſie* and *hatred*. 2. In Chriſtian *Converſation* falſe objects of truſt breed *falſe comforts*,

1.

2.

comforts, and *true fears*; for in what measure we *trust* in any thing that is *uncertain*, in the same measure will our griefe be when it failes us; the more men rely upon deceitfull Crutches the greater is their fall; God can neither endure *false* objects, nor a *double object* (as hath been shewed) for a man to rely upon any thing *equally* in the same rank with himselfe; for the propounding of a double object, argues a *double heart*, and a double heart is alwaies *unsetled*, for it will regard God no longer than it can enjoy that which it joyns together with him; Therefore it is said, *You cannot serve two Masters*, not subordinate one to another; whence it was that our Saviour told those *worldly men* which followed him: *that they could not beleeve in him, because they sought honour one of another*; and in case of competition, if their *honour* and *reputation* should come into question, they would be sure to be false to Christ, and rather part with him than their own credit and esteem in the world.

Chap. 19.

James 1. 8.

Luk. 16. 13.

Joh. 5. 44.

David (here) by charging his soul to *trust in God*, saw there was nothing else that could bring true rest and quiet unto

Chap. 19.

him; for whatsoever is besides God, is but a creature; and whatever is in the creature is but *borrowed*, and at Gods disposing; and *changeable*, or else it were not a creature; *David* saw his errour soon, for the ground of his disquiet was trusting something else besides God, therefore when he began to say, *My hill is strong, I shall not be moved*, &c. then presently *his soul was troubled*. Out of God there is nothing fit for the *soul* to stay it self upon; for

Psa. 30. 6.

I. *Outward* things are not fitted to the *spiritual* nature of the soul; they are *dead* things and cannot touch it being a *lively spirit*, unlesse by way of taint.

I.

2. They are beneath the worth of the soule, and therefore debase the soul, and draw it lower than it self. As a Noble woman, by matching with a mean person much injures her selfe, especially when *higher* matches are offered. Earthly things are not given for *Stayes* wholly to rest on, but for *Comforts* in our way to Heaven; they are no more fit for the soule, than that which hath many *angles* is fit to fill up that which is *round*, which it cannot doe, because of the unevenesse and void places that will remaine;

2.

Outward

Outward things are never ſo well fitted for the ſoule, but that the ſoule will preſently ſee ſome voidneſſe and emptineſſe in them, and in it ſelfe in cleaving to them; for that which ſhall be a fit object for the ſoule, muſt be 1, for the nature of it *ſpirituall* (as the ſoul it ſelf is) 2. *conſtant*, 3, *full* and *ſatisfying*, 4. of equall *continuance* with it, and 5. alwaies yeelding freſh contents: we caſt away flowers, after once we have had the ſweetneſſe of them. becauſe there is not ſtill a freſh ſupply of ſweetneſſe. Whatever comfort is in the creature, the ſoul will ſpend quickly, and look ſtill for more; whereas the comfort we have in God is *undefiled* and *fadeth not away*. How can we truſt to that for comfort, which by very *truſting* proves uncomfortable to us? Outward things are only ſo far forth good, as we do not truſt in them; *thorns* may be *touched*, but not *reſted* on, for then they will pierce; we muſt not ſet our hearts upon things which are never evil to us, but when we *ſet our hearts upon them*. Chap. 19. Pſal. 62. 10.

By truſting any thing but God, we make it 1. an *Idoll*, 2. a *curſe* and not a

Chap. 19. *blessing*; 3. it will prove a *lying vanity*, not yeelding that good which we look for, and 4. a *vexation*, bringing that evil upon us we look not for.

Of all men *Solomon* was the fittest to judge of this, because 1. he had a large heart able to comprehend the variety of things; and 2. (being a mighty King) had advantages of procuring all outward things that might give him satisfaction, and 3. he had a desire answerable, to search out and extract whatever good the creature could yeeld; and yet upon the *trial* of all, he passeth this *verdict* upon all, that they are but *vanity*; whilest he laboured to find that which he sought for in them, he had like to have lost himself; and seeking too much to strengthen himself by forreign combination, he weakened himself the more thereby, until he came to know where the *whole of man* consists. So that now we need not try further conclusions after the peremptory sentence of so wise a man.

Eccles. 1. 2.

Eccl. 12. 13.

But our nature is still apt to thinke there is some secret good in the *forbidden fruit*, and to buy wisedom dearly when we might have it at a cheaper rate, even from

from former universal experience. Chap. 19.

It is a matter both to bee wondred at and pityed, that the soul having God in Christ set before it, alluring it unto him, that he might raise it, inlarge it, and fill it and so make it aboue all other things, should yet debase and make it selfe narrower and weaker by leaning to things meaner than it selfe.

The Kingdome, Soveraignty, and large command of *Man*, continueth while he rests upon God, in whom he reigns (in some sort) over all things under him; but so soon as he removes from God to any thing else, he becomes weak and narrow and slavish presently; for,

The soule is as that which it relyes upon; if on *vanity*, it selfe becomes vain; for that which contents the soul must satisfie all the wants and desires of it, which no particular thing can doe, and the soule is more sensible of a little thing that it wants, than of all other things which it injoyes.

But see the *insufficiency* of all other things (out of God) to support the soule, in their several degrees. *First*, All *outward* things can make a man no happier 1.

Chap. 19. than outward things can doe, they cannot reach beyond their proper ſpheare: but our greateſt grievances are *ſpirituall*. And as for inward things, whether *gifts* or *graces*, they cannot be a ſufficient ſtay for the minde; for 1. gifts as policy and wiſdom, *&c.* they are at the beſt very defective, eſpecially when we *truſt in them*; for wiſedome makes men often to *rebell*, and thereupon God delighteth to blaſt their projects: None miſcarry oftner than men of the greateſt parts; as none are oftner drowned than thoſe that are moſt skillfull in ſwimming, becauſe it makes them confident.

2. And for grace though it be the beginning of a new creature in us, yet it is but a *creature*, and therefore not to be truſted in, nay by truſting in it we imbaſe it, and make it more imperfect; ſo far as there is truth of grace, it breeds diſtruſt of our ſelves, and carries the ſoul out of it ſelf to the fountain of ſtrength.

3. And for any works that proceed from grace, by *truſting* thereunto they prove like the reed of Ægypt, which not onely deceives us, but hurts us with the ſplinters: Good workes are good, but confidence

confidence in them is hurtfull; and there is more of our own in them (for the moſt part) to humble us, than of Gods Spirit to embolden us ſo far as to truſt in them. Alas they have nothing from us but weakneſſe and defilement, and therefore ſince the fall, God would have the object of our *truſt* to be (out of our ſelves) *in him*; and to that purpoſe he uſeth all means to take us out of our ſelves, and from the *creature*, that he only might be *our truſt*. Chap. 19.

Yea, we muſt not truſt it ſelf, but God whom it relyes on, who is therefore called our *truſt*. All the glorious things that are ſpoken of truſt are onely made good by God in Chriſt, who (as truſted) doth all for us. 4.

God hath preſcribed *truſt* at the way to carry our ſouls to himſelf, in whom we ſhould only rely, and not in our imperfect truſt, which hath its ebbing and flowing; Neither will truſt in God himſelf for the preſent ſuffice us for future ſtrength and grace, as if truſting in God to day would ſuffice to ſtrengthen us for *to morrow*; but we muſt renew our truſt for freſh ſupply, upon every freſh occaſion. So that we ſee God *alone* muſt be the object of our truſt.

There

Chap. 19.

There is ſtill left in mans nature a deſire of *pleaſure*, *profit*, and of what ever the *creature* preſents as *good*, but the deſire of gracious good is altogether loſt, the ſoule being wholly infected with a contrary taſte. Man hath a nature capable of *excellency*, and deſirous of it, and the Spirit of God *in* and *by the word* reveals where true excellency is to be had; but corrupt nature *leaving God*, ſeeketh it elſewhere, and ſo croſſeth its own deſires, till the Spirit of God diſcovers where theſe things are to be had, and ſo *nature* is brought to its right frame again, by turning the ſtreame into the right current; *Grace*, and *ſinfull nature*, have the ſame general *object* of comfort; only *ſinful nature* ſeeks it in *broken Ciſterns*, and *grace* in the *fountain*; the beginning of our true happineſſe is from the diſcovery of *true* and *falſe* objects, ſo as the ſoul may cleerly ſee what is beſt and ſafeſt, and then ſtedfaſtly rely upon it.

We ſhould labour to ſubdue the firſt inclination of our ſouls to the creatures.

It were an happy way to make the ſoul better acquainted with truſting in God, to labour to ſubdue at the *firſt* all unruly inclinations of the ſoul to earthly things, and to take advantage of the firſt tenderneſſe

neſſe of the ſoul, to weed out that which is ill, and to plant *knowledge* and *love* of the beſt things in it; otherwiſe where affections to any thing below get much ſtrength in the ſoule, it will by little and little be ſo overgrown, that there will be no place left in it, either for (*obiect* or *act*) God or truſt; God cannot come to take his place in the heart by *truſt*, but where the powers of the ſoul are brought under to regard *him* and thoſe great things hee brings with him, above all things elſe in the world beſides.

In theſe glorious times *wherein* ſo great a *light* ſhineth, whereby ſo great things are diſcovered, what a ſhame is it to bee ſo narrow hearted as to fixe upon *preſent* things; our aymes and affections ſhould be ſutable to the things themſelves ſet before us; Our hearts ſhould be more and more *inlarged*, as things are more and more revealed to us; We ſee in the things of this life, as *wiſdome* and *experience* increaſeth, ſo our aimes and deſires increaſe likewiſe; A young beginner thinks it a great matter if he have a little to *begin withall*, but as he growes in *trading*, and ſeeth further wayes of getting, his

thoughts

Chap. 20.

thoughts and desires are raised higher: Children think as Children, but riper age puts away childishness, when their understandings are enlarged to see, what they did not see before; we should never rest till our hearts, according to the measure of revelation of those excellent things which God hath for us, have answerable apprehension of the same. Oh if we had but faith to answer those glorious truths which God hath revealed, what manner of lives should we leade!

CHAP. XXI.

Of the method of trusting in God; and the tryall of that trust.

13. LAstly, (to add no more) our trusting in God should follow Gods order in promising. The first promise is of forgiveness of sin to repentant believers; next 2. of healing and sanctifying grace: then 3. the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven to them that are sanctified. 4. and then the promises of all things needful in our way to the kingdom, &c. Now answerably the soule being enlightned to see its danger

danger, should look first to Gods mercy in Christ pardoning sin, because sin only divides betwixt God and the soul; next to the promises of grace for the leading of a Christian life, for true faith desires healing mercy as well as pardoning mercy, and then to heaven and all things that may bring us thither.

By all this we see that it is not so easie a matter as the world takes it, to bring God and the soul together by trusting on him; it must be effected by the mighty power of God raising up the soul to himselfe, to lay hold upon the glorious power, goodnesse, and other excellencies that are in him; God is not onely the object, but the working cause of our trust; for such is our proneness to live by sense, and natural *reason*, and such is the strangeness and height of divine things, such our inclination to a *self-sufficiency* and contentment in the creature, and so hard a matter it is to take off the soule from *self-bottoms*, by reason of our unacquaintance with God and his wayes; besides such gulls still remaines upon our souls for our rebellion and unkindnesse towards God; that it makes us afraid to entertain

serious

Chap. 20.

serious thoughts of him; and so great is the distance betwixt his *infinite Majesty*, (before whom the very *Angels* doe cover their faces) and *us*, by reason of the *unspiritualness* of our nature, being opposite to his most *absolute* purity, that we cannot be brought to any *familiarity* with the Lord (so as to come into his holy presence with *confidence* to rely upon *him*, or any comfort to have *communion* with *him*) till our hearts be sanctified and lifted up by *divine vigour* infused into them.

Though there be some *inclination* by reason of the remainder of the Image of God in us, to an outward *morall* obedience of the *Law*, yet alas, we have not onely *no seeds* of *Evangelicall* truths and of faith to beleeve them, but an utter *contrariety* in our *natures* (as corrupted) either to this, or any other good. When our conscience is once awaked, we meditate nothing but *fears* and *terrours*, and dare not so much as think of an angry God, but rather how we may escape & fly from him. Therefore together with a *deep consideration* of the grounds wee have of *trusting* God, it is necessary wee should think of the indisposition of our hearts

unto

unto it, especially when there is greatest need thereof, that so our hearts may be forced to put out that petition of the *Disciples* to God; *Lord increase our faith, Lord help us against our unbeleeving hearts, &c.* By prayer and holy thoughts stirred up in the use of the meanes, wee shall feel divine strength infused and conveyed into our souls to *trust*.

The more care we ought to have to maintain our trust in God, because (besides the hardnesse of it) it is a radicall and fundamentall grace; it is as it were the *mother root* and great *veyne* whence the exercise of all graces have their beginning and strength. The decay of a plant though it *appears* first from the *withering* of the twigs and branches, yet it arises chiefly from a decay in the *root*; So the decay of grace may appear to the view first in our *company, carriage*, and *speeches, &c.* but the primitive & original ground of the same; is weaknesse of *faith* in the heart; therefore it should be our wisedome (especially) to look to the feeding of the *root*; we must 1. looke that our *principles* and *foundation* be good, and 2. build strongly upon them, and 3. *repaire*

Defects in *life* rise from defects in *trust*

Chap. 20.

paire our building every day as continual breaches shall be made upon us, either by *corruptions* and *temptations* from *within* or *without*; and we shall *find* that the main breaches of our lives arise either from *false* principles or doubts, or mindelesnes of those that are true; All sinne is a turning of the soule from God to some other seeming good, but this proceeds from a former turning of the soul from God by distrust. As faith is the first return of the soul to God, so the first degree of departing from God is by *infidelity*, and from thence comes a departure by *other sins*, by which (as sinne is of a winding nature) our unbelief more encreaseth, and so the rent and breach betwixt our souls and God is made greater still (which is that Satan would have) till at length by departing further and further from him, we come to have that peremptory Sentence of *everlasting departure* pronounced against us; so that our departure from God now is a degree to separation *for ever* from him. Therefore it is Satans maine care to come between God and the Soul, that so unlooseing us from God, we might more easily be drawn to *other things*; and if

if he draws us to other things, it is but onely to unloose our hearts from God the more; for he well knows whileſt our ſouls cleave cloſe to God, there is no prevailing againſt us by any created policy or power. Chap. 20.

It was the curſed policy of *Balaam* to adviſe *Balak* to draw the people from *God* (by *fornication*) that ſo God might be drawn from them: the ſinne of their baſe *affections* crept into the very ſpirits of their minde, and drew them from God to Idolatry; Bodily *adultery* makes way for ſpiriaual; An unbelieving heart is an ill heart, and a treacherous heart, becauſe it makes us to *depart from God*, the *living God*, &c. Therefore we ſhould eſpecially take heed of it as we love our lives, yea, our beſt life, which ariſeth from the union of our ſouls with God. Heb. 3. 12.

None ſo oppoſed as a Chriſtian, and in a Chriſtian nothing ſo oppoſed as his faith, becauſe it oppoſeth whatſoever oppoſes God, both *within* and *without* us: it captivates and brings under whatſoever riſes up againſt God in the heart, and ſets it ſelfe againſt whatſoever makes head againſt the ſoul.

Chap. 20.

And because mistake is very dangerous, and we are prone to conceive that to *trust in God* is an easie matter, therefore it is needful that we should have a right conceit of this *trust* what it is, and how it may be discerned, lest we trust to an untrusty *trust*, and to an unsteady stay.

What trust in God is.

We may by what hath been said before, partly discern the *nature* of it, to be nothing else but an exercise of faith, whereby looking to *God in Christ* through the *promises*, we take off our souls from all other supports, and lay them upon God for deliverance and upholding in all *ill*, *present* or *future*, felt or feared, and the obtaining of all *good*, which God sees expedient for us.

The triall of *trust*.

1. Psa. 39. 7.

Now that we may discern the *truth* of our *trust in God* the better, we must know, that true trust is *willing to be tried* and searched, and can say to God as *David*, *Now Lord what wait I for, my hope is in thee*; and as it is willing to come to tryall, so it is able to indure tryall, and to hold out in opposition, as appears in *David*; If faith hath a *promise*, it will rely and rest upon it, say flesh and blood what it can to the contrary; true faith is as large as the *promise*,

miſe, and will take Gods part againſt whatſoever oppoſes it. Chap. 20.

And as faith ſingles not out one part of divine truth to believe and rejects another, ſo it relyes upon *God* for every good thing, *one* as well as *another*; the ground whereof is this, The ſame love of God that intends us heaven, intends us a ſupply of all neceſſaries that may bring us thither. 2.

A childe that beleves his father will make him *Heire*, doubts not but he will provide him food and nouriſhment, and give him breeding ſutable to his future condition; It is a vaine pretence to believe that God will give us heaven, and yet leave us to ſhift for our ſelves in the way.

Where *truſt* is rightly planted, it gives *boldneſſe* to the ſoule in going to God, for it is grounded upon the diſcovery of Gods love firſt to us, and ſeeth a warrant from him for whatſoever it truſts him for; though the things themſelves bee never ſo great, yet they are no greater than God is willing to beſtow; againe, *truſt* is bold becauſe it is grounded upon the worthineſſe of a *Mediator* who hath made way to Gods favour for us, and 3. 1.

Chap. 20. appears now in heaven to maintain it towards us.

4. Yet this boldneſſe is with *Humility*, which carries the Soule out of it ſelfe; and that boldneſſe which the ſoul by truſt hath with God, is from God himſelfe; it hath nothing to alleadge from it ſelfe but its own emptineſſe and Gods fulneſs, its own ſinfulneſſe and Gods mercy, its own humble obedience, and Gods command; hence it is that the true beleevers heart is not lifted up, nor ſwels with *ſelf-confidence*; as truſt comes in, that goes out; truſt is never planted and grows but in an humble and low ſoul; truſt is a holy motion of the ſoul to God, and motion ariſes from want; thoſe (and thoſe only) ſeek out abroad that want ſuccour at home; Plants move not from place to place, becauſe they finde nouriſhment where they ſtand; but *living* creatures ſeek abroad for their food, and for that end have a power of moving from place to place; and this is the reaſon why *truſt* is expreſſed by *going* to God.

5. Hereupon *truſt* is a *dependent* grace, anſwerable to our dependent condition; it looks upon all things it hath or deſires

to

to have, as coming from God and his free grace and power: it desireth not onely wisedome but to be wise in his wisedom, to see in his light, to be strong in his strength, the thing it selfe contents not this grace of *trust*, but Gods blessing and love in the thing, it cares not for any thing further than it can have it with Gods favour and good liking. Chap. 20.

Hence it is that trust is an obsequious and an observing grace, stirring up the soul to a desire of pleasing God in all things, and to a feare of displeasing him: He that pretends to trust the Lord in a course of offending, may trust to this that God will meet him in another way than he looks for: He that is a tenant at *courtesie* will not offend his Lord: hence it is that the Apostle enforceth that exhortation to *work out our salvation with feare and trembling*, because it is God that worketh the *will* and the *deed*, and according to *his good pleasure*, not *ours*: Therefore *faith* is an effectuall working grace, it works in Heaven with God, it workes within us, commanding all the powars of the soule, it works *without us*, conquering whatsoever is in the world on 6.

Chap. 20.

the *right hand* to draw us from God, or *on the left* hand to diſcourage us; it works againſt *Hell* and the powers of darkneſſe; and all by vertue of *truſting*, as it draweth ſtrength from God; It ſtirrs up all other graces and keeps them in exerciſe, and thereupon the acts of other graces are attributed to *faith*, as *Heb.* 11. It breeds a holy jealouſie over our ſelves, leſt we give God juſt cauſe to ſtop the influence of his grace towards us, ſo to let us ſee that wee ſtand not by our owne ſtrength: thoſe that take liberty in things they either *know* or *doubt* will diſpleaſe God, ſhew they want the *feare* of God, and this want of feare ſhewes their want of *dependency*, and therefore want of *truſt*; dependency is alwayes very reſpective, it ſtudieth contentment and care to comply; this was it made

Heb. 12. 11

Enoch walke with God, and ſtudy how to pleaſe him; when we know nothing can doe us good or hurt but *God*, it drawes our chiefe care to approve our ſelves to him. Obedience of *faith* and obedience of life will goe together; and therefore he that commits his ſoule to God to *ſave*, will commit his ſoule to God to ſanctifie

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and *guide* in a way of well pleasing: Not onely the *tame*, but the most savage *creatures*, will be at the beck of those that feed them, though they are ready to fall violently upon others; disobedience therefore is against the principles of *nature*. Chap. 20. 1 Pet. 4.

7. This *dependency* is either in the use of meanes, or else when meanes faile us; true *dependency* is exactly carefull of all meanes. When God hath set downe a course of means, wee must not expect that God should alter his ordinary course of providence for us; deserved *disappointment* is the fruit of this presumptuous confidence; The more we depend on a wise Physitian, the more we will observe his *directions*, and be carefull to use what he prescribes; yet we must use the means *as means*, and not set them in Gods room, for that as the way to blast our hopes; The way to have any thing *taken away and not blest*, is to *set our heart too much upon it*. Too much griefe in parting with any thing, shewes too much trust in the injoying of it: and therefore he that uses the meanes in *faith*, will alwayes joyne *prayer* unto *God*, from whom

Chap 20.

as *every good thing comes*, ſo likewiſe doth the bleſſing and ſucceſſe thereof; where much endeavour is and little ſeeking to God, it ſhews there is little truſt; the *Widow* that truſted in God, *continued* likewiſe *in prayers day and night.*

The beſt diſcovery of our not relying too much on means, is, when all means faile, if we can ſtill rely upon God, as being ſtill where he was, and hath waies of his owne for helping of us, either immediately from himſelfe, or by ſetting a worke other meanes (and thoſe perhaps very unlikely) ſuch as we thinke not of. God hath waies of his owne, *Abraham* never honoured God more, than when he truſted in God for a ſonne againſt the courſe of nature, and when he had a ſon, was ready to ſacrifice him, upon confidence that God would raiſe him from the dead againe. This was the ground upon which *Daniel* with ſuch great authority reproved *Balthaſar* that he had not a care *to glorifie God*, in whoſe hand *his breath was, and all his wayes.* The greateſt honour we can doe unto God, is when we *ſee nothing*, but rather all contrary to that we look for, then to ſhut our eyes to

inferiour

inferiour things below, and look altogether upon his *Al-sufficiency*; God can convey himselfe more comfortably to us when he pleaseth *without* means than *by* meanes. True *trust* as it sets God highest in the soule, so in *danger* and *wants* it hath present recourse to him, as the *Conies* to the *Rocks*.

8. And because Gods times and seasons are the best, it is an evidence of true trust when we can wait Gods leisure, and not make haste and so run before God; for else the more haste the worse speed; God seldome makes any promise to his Children, but he exerciseth their trust in *waiting* long before, as *David* for a *Kingdome*, *Abraham* for a *sonne*, the *whole world* for *Christs coming*, &c.

9. One maine evidence of true trust in God is here in the Text, we see here it hath a quieting and stilling vertue, for it stayes the soul upon the fulnesse of Gods *love* joyned with his ability to supply our wants and relieve our necessities, though faith doth not (at the first especially) so stay the soule, as to take away all suspicious feares of the contrary: There be so many things in trouble that presse upon the

the ſoule, as hinder the joyning of God and it together, yet the prevailing of our unbelief is taken away, the reign of it is broken. If the touch of Chriſt in his abaſement or earth drew vertue from him, certain it is that faith cannot touch Chriſt in heaven, but it will draw a quieting and ſanctified virtue from him, which will in ſome meaſure ſtop the iſſues of an unquiet ſpirit; the Needle in the Compaſs will ſtand North, though with ſome trembling.

A Ship that lyes at Anchor may be ſomething toſſed, but yet it ſtill remains ſo faſtned, that it cannot be carried away by winde or weather; the ſoul after it hath caſt anchor upon God, may (as we ſee here in *David*) be diſquieted a while, but this unſetling tends to a deeper ſetling; the more we beleeve, the more we are eſtabliſhed; faith is an eſtabliſhing grace, *by faith we ſtand*, and ſtand *faſt*, and are able to withſtand whatſoever oppoſeth us. For what can ſtand againſt God, upon whoſe truth and power *faith* relyes? The devil fears not us, but *him* whom we fly unto for ſuccour; It is the ground we ſtand on ſecures us, not our ſelves. As

Chap. 20.

As it is our happineſſe, ſo it muſt bee our endeavour to bring the ſoul cloſe to God, that nothing get between, for then the ſoul hath no ſure footing. When we ſtep from God Satan ſteps in by ſome temptation or other preſently. It requires a great deal of *ſelf-deniall*, to bring a ſoul either ſwelling with *carnal confidence*, or ſinking by fear and *diſtruſt*, to lie levell upon God, and cleave faſt to him: Square will lie faſt upon Square; but our hearts are ſo full of unevenneſſe, that God hath much adoe to ſquare our hearts fit for him, notwithſtanding the ſoul hath no reſt without this.

The uſe of *truſt* is beſt known in the worſt times, for naturally in ſickneſs we truſt to the Phyſician, in want to our wit and ſhifts, in danger to policy and the arme of fleſh, in plenty to our preſent ſupply, *&c.* but when we have nothing in view, then indeed ſhould God be God unto us. In times of diſtreſſe, when he ſhewes himſelfe in the waies of his mercy and goodneſſe, then we ſhould eſpecially magnifie his name, which will move him to diſcover his excellencies the more, the more we take notice of them. And there-

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Chap. 21.

fore *David* ſtrengthens himſelfe in theſe words that he hoped for better times, wherein God would ſhew himſelf more gracious to him, becauſe he reſolved to *praiſe him.*

This truſting joints the ſoul again, and ſets it in its owne truſt reſting place, and ſets God in his own place in the ſoul, that is, the higheſt; and the creature in its place, which is to be under God, as in its own nature, ſo in our hearts. This is to aſcribe *honour due unto God*, the only way to bring peace into the ſoul: Thus if we can bring our hope and truſt to the God of hope and truſt, we ſhall ſtand impregnable in all aſſaults, as will beſt appear in theſe particulars.

Pſa. 29. 2.

CHAP. XXI.

Of quieting the ſpirit in troubles for ſinne. And Objections anſwered.

TO begin with troubles of the ſpirit, which indeed are the ſpirit of troubles, as diſabling that which ſhould uphold a man in all his troubles. A ſpirit ſet in tune, and aſſiſted by a higher ſpirit, will ſtand

ſtand out againſt ordinary aſſaults, but when God (the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh) ſhall ſeem contrary to our ſpirits, whence then ſhall we finde relief?

Here all is ſpiritual, God a Spirit, the ſoule a Spirit, the terrours *ſpirituall*, the devil who joynes with theſe a *Spirit*; yea, that which the ſoule feares for the time to come, is *ſpirituall*, and not onely ſpirituall, but *eternall*, unleſſe it pleaſeth God at length to break out of the thick cloud, wherewith he covers himſelfe, and ſhine upon the ſoule, as in his owne time he will.

In this eſtate, comforts themſelves are uncomfortable to the ſoule; it quarrels with every thing, the better things it hears of, the more it is vexed. Oh what is this to me, what have I to doe with theſe Comforts? the more happineſſe may be had, the more is my griefe; As for comforts from Gods inferiour bleſſings, as *friends*, *children*, *eſtate*, &c. the ſoule is ready to miſconſtrue Gods end in all, as not intending any good to him thereby.

In this condition God doth not appeare in his owne ſhape to the ſoule, but in

Chap. 21.

in the ſhape of an enemy; and when God ſeemes againſt us, who ſhall ſtand for us? Our bleſſed Saviour in his agony had the *Angels* to comfort him; but had he been a meer man, and not aſſiſted by the Godhead, it was not the comfort (no not) of Angels that could have upheld him, in the ſenſe of his Fathers withdrawing his countenance from him. Alas then what will become of us in ſuch a caſe, if we be not ſupported by a ſpirit of *power* and the power of an almighty Spirit?

If all the temptations of the whole world, and hell it ſelfe were muſtered together, they were nothing to this, whereby the great God ſets himſelfe contrary to his poore creature None can conceive ſo, but thoſe that have felt it. If the hiding of his face will ſo trouble the ſoule, what will his frowne and angry looke doe? Needs muſt the ſoule be in a wofull plight, when as God ſeems not onely to be abſent from it but an enemy to it. When a man ſees no comfort from above, and looks inward and ſees leſſe; when he lookes about him, and ſees nothing but evidences of Gods diſpleaſure; beneath him, and ſees nothing but deſpe-

ration;

ration; clouds wi hout, and clouds within, nothing but clouds in his condition; here he had need of faith to break through all, and see Sun through the thickest cloud.

Upon this, the distressed soule is in danger to be set upon a *temptation*, called the temptation of *blasphemy*, that is, to entertaine bitter thoughts against God, and especially against the grace and goodnesse of God, wherein he desires to make himselfe most knowne to his Creature. In those that have wilfully resisted divine truths made known unto them, and after taste, despised them, a perswasion that God hath forsaken them, set on strongly by Satan, hath a worse effect, it stirs up a hellish hatred against God, carrying them to a revengefull desire of opposing whatsoever is Gods, though not alwaies openly (for then they should loose the advantage of doing hurt) yet secretly and subtilly, and under pretence of the contrary. To this degree of *blasphemy* Gods children never fall, yet they may feel the venome of corruption stirring in their hearts, against God and his waies which he takes with them; and this addes greatly

Chap. 21.

greatly to the depth of their affliction, when afterward they thinke with themselves what helliſh ſtuffe they carry in their ſouls. This is not ſo much diſcerned in the temptation, but after the fit is ſomewhat remitted.

In this kinde of deſertion, ſeconded with this kinde of temptation, the way is to call home the ſoul, and to check it, and charge it to truſt in God, even though he ſhews himſelfe an enemy, for it is but a ſhew, he doth but put on a mask with a purpoſe to reveal himſelf the more graciouſly afterward; his manner is to work by contraries. In this condition God lets in ſome few beams of light, whereby the ſoul caſts a longing look upon God, even when he ſeems to forſake it; it will with *Jonas* in the belly of hell, look back to the holy Temple of God, it will ſteal a look unto Chriſt. Nothing more comfortable in this condition, than to fly to him, that by experience knew what this kinde of forſaking meant, for this very end that he might be the fitter to ſuccour us in the like diſtreſſe.

Jon. 2. 4.

Learn therefore to appeale from God to God, oppoſe his gracious nature, his

ſweet

ſweet promiſes to ſuch as are in darkneſſe, and ſee no light, inviting them to truſt in him, though there appeare to the eye of ſenſe and reaſon nothing but darkneſſe: Here make uſe of that ſweet Relation of God in Chriſt, becomming a Father to us: *Doubtleſſe thou art our Father*: fleſh would make a doubt of it, and thou ſeemeſt to hide thy face from us, yet doubtleſſe thou art our Father, and haſt in former time ſhewed thy ſelfe to be ſo, we will not leave thee till we have a bleſſing from thee, till we have a kinder looke from thee: This *wraſtling* will prevaile at length, and we ſhall have ſuch a ſight of him, as ſhall be an encouragement for the time to come, when *we ſhall be able to comfort others, with thoſe comforts whereby we have been refreſhed our ſelves.* With the Saints caſe remember the Saints courſe, which is *to truſt in God.* So Chriſt the Head of the Church commits himſelfe to that God, whoſe favour for the preſent he felt not; So *Job* reſolves upon truſt though God ſhould *kill him.*

Chap. 21. Iſay 50.10.

Eſa. 63.16.

2 Cor. 1.4.

But theſe holy perſons were not troubled with the guilt of any particular ſinne, but I

Anſw.

Chap. 21.

feel the juſt diſpleaſure of God kindled againſt me for many and great offences.

Anſw. True it is, that ſinne is not ſo ſweet in the committing, as it is heavy and bitter in the reckoning. When *Adam* had once offended God, *Paradiſe* it ſelfe was not Paradiſe to him. The preſence of God which was moſt comfortable before, was now his greateſt terrour, had not God out of his free infinite and preventing mercy come betwixt him and hell, by the promiſe of the bleſſed ſeed. 1 Cor. 5 21. This ſeed was made *ſinne* to ſatisfie for ſin; ſin paſſive in himſelfe to ſatisfie for ſin *active* in us.

When God once charges ſinne upon the ſoule, Alas who ſhall take it off? When the great God ſhall frowne, the ſmiles of the creature cannot refreſh us. Sin makes us afraid of that which ſhould be our greateſt comfort; it puts a ſting into every other evil, upon the ſeizing of any evil, either of body, ſoul, or condition, the guilty ſoul is imbittered and enraged; for from that which it feeles, it fore-ſpeaks to it ſelfe worſe to come. It interprets all that befals as the meſſengers of an angry God, ſent in diſpleaſure

to

to take revenge upon it. This weakeneth the courage, wasteth the ſpirits, and blaſteth the beauty even of Gods dearest ones. There is not the ſtouteſt man breathing, but if God ſets his Conſcience againſt him, it will pull him down, and lay him flat, and fill him with ſuch inward terrors, as he ſhall be more afraid of himſelfe, than of all the world beſide. This were a dolefull caſe, if God had not provided in Chriſt a remedy for this great evil of evils, and if the holy Spirit were not above the conſcience, able as well to pacifie it by the ſenſe of *Gods love* in Chriſt, as to convince it of ſinne, and the juſt deſert thereby. Chap. 21. Pſa. 38.

But my ſins are not the ſins of an ordinary man, my ſpots are not as the ſpots of the reſt of Gods Children. Object.

Conceive of Gods mercy as no ordinary mercy, and Chriſts obedience as no ordinary obedience. There is ſomething in the very greatneſſe of ſinne, that may encourage us to go to God, for the greater our ſinnes are, the greater the glory of his powerfull mercy in pardoning, and his powerfull grace in healing will appear. The great God delights to ſhew Anſw.

Chap. 21.

his greatnesse in the greatest things; Even in his glory, when they are put upon that, which may set forth their worth in any kinde. Mic. 7. 18. *GOD delighteth* in mercy, it *pleaseth him* (nothing so well) as being his chief *Name*, which then we take in *vaine*, when we are not moved by it to come unto him.

That which Satan would use as an argument to drive us from GOD, wee should use as a strong plea with him. Lord; the greater my sins are, the greater will be the glory of thy pardoning mercy. *David* after his hainous sinnes, cries not for *mercy*, but for *abundance* of mercy, Psal. 51. *according to the multitude of thy mercies, doe away mine offences*: his mercy is not onely above his *owne* workes, but above ours too. If we could sinne more than hee could pardon, then we might have some reason to despaire. Despaire is a high point of *Atheisme*, it takes away God and Christ both at once. *Judas* in betraying our Saviour, was an occasion of his death as *man*, but in despairing he did what lay in him to take away his life as *God*.

When therefore *Conscience* joyning with

with Satan, ſets out the ſinne in its colours, labour thou by faith to ſet out God in his colours, infinite in mercy and loving kindneſſe. Here lies the art of a Chriſtian; It is divine Rhetorick thus to perſwade and ſet down the ſoule. Thy ſins are great, but *Adams* was greater, who being ſo newly advanced above all the creatures, and taken into ſo neare an acquaintance with God, and having ability to perſiſt in that condition if hee would, yet willingly overthrew himſelfe and all his whole poſterity, by yeelding to a temptation, which though high (as being promiſed to be like unto God,) yet ſuch as he ſhould and might have reſiſted; No ſinne we can commit, can be a ſinne of ſo tainting and ſpreading a nature, yet as he fell by *diſtruſt*, ſo he was recovered by *truſting*, and ſo muſt we by relying on a ſecond *Adam*, whoſe obedience and righteouſneſſe *from thence reignes*, to the taking away not onely of that one ſinne of *Adam*, and ours in him, *but of all*, and not onely to the pardon of all ſinne, but to a right of everlaſting life. The Lord thinkes himſelfe diſparaged, when wee have no higher thoughts of his mercy, than

Chap. 21.

Rom. 5. 17.

Gods mercy not to be limited.

Chap. 21.

than of our *sins*, when we bring God down to our Model, when as *the heavens are not so much higher than the earth, than his thoughts of love and goodnesse, are above the thoughts of our unworthinesse.* It is a kinde of taking away the Almighty, to limit his boundlesse mercy in Christ, within the narrow scantling of our apprehension; yet *infidelity* doth this, which should stirre up in us a loathing of it above all other sinnes. But this is Satans fetch, when once he hath brought us into sinnes against the Law, then to bring us into sinnes of a higher nature, and deeper danger, even against the blessed *Gospel*, that so there may be no remedy, but that mercy it selfe might condemne us.

Isa. 55. 9.

All the aggravations, that conscience and Satan helping it, are able to raise sin unto, cannot rise to that degree of infiniteneſse, that Gods mercy in Christ is of. If there be a *spring* of sinne in us, there is a spring of mercy in him, and a fountaine opened daily to wash our selves in. If we *sinne* oft, let us doe as *S. Paul*, who prayed oft *against the prick of the flesh.* If it be a devil of long continuance,

Zac. 13. 1.

yet

yet fasting and prayer will drive him out at length.

Chap. 21.

Nothing keepes the soul more down than *sinnes* of long continuance, because corruption of nature hath gotten such strength in them, as *nature* is added to *nature*, and custome doth so determine and sway the soule one way, that men think it impossible to recover themselves, they see one linke of sin draw on another, all making a chain to fasten them to destruction, they thinke of necessity they must be damned, because custome hath bred a necessity of sinning in them, and conceive of the promise of mercy, as only made to such as turn from their sinfull courses, in which they see themselves so hardened, that they cannot repent.

Sins of continuance dangerous.

Certaine it is, the condition is most lamentable, that yeelding unto sinne brings men unto. Men are carefull to prevent dangerous sicknesses of body, and the danger of law concerning their estates; but seldome consider into what a miserable plight their sinnes which they so willingly give themselves up unto, will bring them. If they doe not perish in their *sinnes*, yet their yeelding will bring

Chap. 21.

them into ſuch a dolefull condition, that they would give the whole world, if they were poſſeſſours of it, to have their ſpirits at freedome from this bondage and feare.

How to deal with ſuch, as have lived long in ſinne.

To ſuch as bleſſe themſelves in an ill way upon hope of mercy, wee dare not ſpeake a word of comfort, becauſe God doth not, but threatens, his wrath ſhall burne to hell againſt them. Yet becauſe while life continues there may bee as a *ſpace*, ſo a *place*, and *grace* for repentance, theſe muſt be dealt withal in ſuch a manner, as they may be ſtayed and ſtopped in their dangerous courſes, there muſt be a ſtop before a turne.

And when their conſciences are throughly awaked with ſenſe of their danger, let them ſeriouſly conſider whither ſin, and Satan by ſin is carrying of them, and lay to heart the juſtice of God, ſtanding before them as an Angell with a drawn ſword, ready to fall upon them if they poſt on ſtill.

Yet to keep them from utter ſinking, let them conſider withall, the unlimited mercy of God, as not limited to any perſon, or any ſinne, ſo not to any time; there

is

Chap. 21.

is no prescription of time can binde God, his mercy hath no certaine date that will expire, so as those that fly unto it, shall have no benefit. Invincible mercy will never be conquered, and endlesse goodnesse never admits of bounds or end.

Bonitas invicta non vincitur, & infinita misericordia non finitur. Fulgent.

What kinde of people were those that followed Christ? were they not such as had lived long in their sinfull courses? He did not only raise them that were newly dead, but *Lazarus* that had lyen *foure dayes in the grave.*, They thought Christs power in raising the dead, had reached to a short time onely, but he would let them know, that he could as well raise those that had been *long* as lately dead. If Christ be the Physitian, it is no matter of how long continuance the disease be. He is good at all kinde of diseases, and will not endure the reproach of disability to cure any. Some diseases are the reproaches of other Physitians, as being above their skill to helpe, but no conceit more dangerous when we are to deale with Christ.

"The blessed Martyr *Bilney* was much "offended when hee heard an eloquent "Preacher inveighing against sinne, saying

Chap. 21.

"ing thus, Behold, thou haſt lyen rotten "in thy owne luſts, by the ſpace of ſix- "ty years, even as a beaſt in his owne "dung, and wilt thou preſume in one "yeare to goe forward towards heaven, "and that in thine old age, as much as "thou wentſt backward from heaven to "hell in ſixty years? Is not this a goodly "argument (ſaith *Bilney?*) Is this prea- "ching of repentance in the name of Je- "ſus? It is as if Chriſt had died in vain "for ſuch a man, and that he muſt make "ſatisfaction for himſelfe. If I had "heard (ſaith he) ſuch preaching of re- "pentance in times paſt, I had utterly "deſpaired of mercy: We muſt never think the door of hope to be ſhut againſt us, if we have a purpoſe to turne unto God. As there is nothing more injurious to Chriſt, ſo nothing more fooliſh and groundleſſe then to diſtruſt, it being the chief ſcope of God in his word to draw our truſt to him in Chriſt, in whom is alwayes open a breaſt of mercy for humbled ſinners to fly unto.

But thus far the conſideration of our long time ſpent in the devils ſervice ſhold prevail with us, as to take more ſhame to

Chap. 21.

to our ſelves, ſo to reſolve more ſtrongly for God and his wayes, and to account it more then ſufficient that we have ſpent already, ſo much precious time to ſo ill purpoſes; and the leſſe time we have to make the more haſte, to worke for God, and bring all the honour we can to Religion in ſo little a ſpace. Oh how doth it grieve thoſe that have felt the gracious power of Chriſt in converting their ſoules, that ever they ſhould ſpend the ſtrength of their parts in the work of his and their enemy! And might they live longer, it is their full purpoſe for ever to renounce their former waies. There is bred in them an eternall deſire of pleaſing God, as in the wicked there is an eternal deſire of offending him, which eternity of deſires God looks to in both of them, and rewards them accordingly, though he cuts off the thred of their lives.

But God in wiſedome will have the converſions of ſuch as have gone on in a courſe of ſinning (eſpecially after light revealed) to be rare and difficult. Births in thoſe that are ancienter, are with greater danger than in the younger ſort. God will take a courſe, that his grace ſhall not be

Cavendum eſt vulnus, quod dolore curatur.

Chap. 21.

be turned into wantonneſſe. He oft holds ſuch upon the rack of a troubled conſcience, that they and others may fear to buy the pleaſure of ſin at ſuch a rate. Indeed where *ſin* abounds, there *grace* ſuperabounds, but then it is where ſin that abounded in the *life* abounds in the *conſcience* in grief and deteſtation of it, as the greateſt evill. Chriſt groaned at the raiſing of *Lazarus*, which he did not at others, becauſe that although to an Almighty power all things are alike eaſie, yet he will ſhew that there be degrees of difficulties in the things themſelves, and make it appear to us that it is ſo. Therefore thoſe that have enjoyed long the ſweet of ſin, may expect the bitterest ſorrow and repentance for ſin.

Yet never give place to thoughts of *deſpaire*, as comming from him that would overturne the end of the Goſpell, which layes open the riches of Gods mercy in Chriſt, which riches none ſet out more than thoſe that have been *the greateſt of ſinners*, as we ſee in *Paul*. We cannot exalt God more than by taking notice, and making uſe of that great deſigne of infinite wiſdome in reconciling

juſtice

justice and mercy together, so as *now* he is not only merciful, but *just in pardoning sins.* Our Saviour as he came towards the latter age of the world, when all things seemest desperate; so he comes to some men in the latter part of their dayes. The mercy shewed to *Zacheus*, and the good *thief* was personal, but the comfort intended by Christ was publick, therefore *still trust in God.* Chap. 21. Rom. 3.26.

In this case we must goe to God, with whom all things are possible, to put forth his Almighty power, not onely in the pardoning, but in subduing our iniquities. He that can make a *Camell* goe through a *needles eye*, can make a high conceited man lowly, a rich man humble. Therefore never question his power, much lesse his willingnesse, when he is not only ready to receive us when we return, but perswades and intreats us to come in unto him, yea, after *back-sliding* and false dealing with him, wherein he allows no mercy to be shewed by man, yet he will take liberty to shew mercy himself. Jer. 3. 2.

But I have often relapsed and fallen into the same sin again and again. *Object.*

If Christ will have us pardon our brother *Answ.*

Chap. 21. brother seventy seven times, can we think that he will enjoyne us more, than he will be ready to doe himselfe, when in case of shewing mercy he would have us think his thoughts to be farre above ours? *Adam* lost all by once sinning, but we are under a better covenant, a covenant of mercy, and are encouraged by the Son to go to the Father every day for the sins of that day.

Isa 55.1.

Where the worke of grace is begun, sinne loses strength by every new fall; for hence issues deeper humility, stronger hatred, fresh indignation against our selves, more experience of the deceitfulnesse of our hearts, renewed resolutions until sin be brought under. That should not drive us from God, which God would have us make use of, to fly the rather to him, since there is a throne of grace set up in Jesus Christ we may boldly make use of, and let us be ashamed to sinne, and not be ashamed to glorifie Gods mercy in begging pardon for sinne. Nothing will make us more ashamed to sin, then thoughts of so free and large mercy. It will grieve an ingenious spirit to offend so good a God. Ah that there should be such

such an heart in me, as to tire the patience of God, and damne up his goodneſs, as much as in me lyes! but this is our comfort, that the plea of mercy from a broken ſpirit to a gracious Father, will ever hold good. When we are at the loweſt in this world, yet there are theſe three ground of comfort ſtill remaining. 1. That we are not yet in the place of the damned, whoſe eſtate is unalterable. 2. That whileſt we live there is time and ſpace for recovering of our ſelves. 3. That there is grace offered, if we will not ſhut our hearts againſt it. Chap. 22.

O, but every one hath his time, my good hour may be paſt. Object.

That is counſell to thee, it is not paſt if thou canſt raiſe up thy heart to God, and embrace his goodneſſe. Shew by thy yeelding unto mercy, that thy time of mercy is not yet out, rather then by concluding uncomfortably, willingly betray thy ſelfe to thy greateſt enemy, enforcing that upon thy ſelfe, which God labours to draw thee from. As in the ſinne againſt the holy Ghoſt, feare ſhewes that we have not committed it: So in this, a tender heart fearing leſt our time be paſt, Anſw.

ſhews

Chap. 22.

ſhewes plainly that it is not paſt.

Look upon examples, when the Prodigall in his forlorne condition was going to his Father, his *Father* ſtayed not for him,

Lnke 15. but *meets him* in the way, he did not only goe, but *ranne* to meet him. God is more willing to entertain us, than we are to caſt our ſelves upon him: As there is *a fountain opened for ſin, and for uncleanneſſe,* ſo it is a *living* fountain of living *water*, that runnes for ever, and can never be drawn dry.

Caution. Here remember, that I build not a ſhelter for the preſumptuous, but onely open an harbour for the truly humbled ſoul, to put himſelfe into.

CHAP. XXII.

Of ſorrow for ſin, and hatred for ſin, when right and ſufficient. Helps thereto.

Object. *AH! ther's my miſery. If I could be humbled for ſin, I might hope for mercy, but I never yet knew what a broken heart meant, this ſoul of mine was never as yet ſenſible of the grief and ſmart of ſin, how then can I expect any comfort?*

Is

It is one of Satans policies to hold us in a dead and barren condition, by following us with conceits, that wee have not ſorrowed in proportion to our offences. True it is, we ſhould labour that our ſorrow might in ſome meaſure anſwer to the hainouſneſſe of our ſinnes: but we muſt know ſorrow is not required for it ſelf in that degree as *faith* is: If we could truſt in God without much ſorrow for our ſins, then it would not be required, for God delights not in our ſorrow as ſorrow, God in mercy both requires it and workes it, as thereby making us capable veſſels of mercy, fit to acknowledge, value, and walk worthy of Chriſt; he requires it as it is a meanes to imbitter ſinne, and the delightfull pleaſures thereof unto us, and by that meanes bring us to a right judgement of our ſelves, and the creature, with which ſinne commits ſpirituall adultery, that ſo we may recover our taſte before loſt. And then, when with the Prodigall we returne unto our ſelves (having loſt our ſelves before) we are fit to judge of the baſeneſſe of ſinne, and of the worth of mercy; and ſo upon grounds of right reaſon, be willing to

Chap. 22. *Anſw.* I.

Sorrow not required for it ſelf as ſorrow.

Chap. 22.

alter our condition, and embrace mercy upon any terms it ſhall pleaſe Chriſt to enjoyn.

Anſw. 2. Secondly, if we could grieve and caſt down our ſelves beneath the earth as low as the nethermoſt pit, yet this would be no ſatisfaction to God for ſin; of it ſelf, it is rather an entrance, and beginning of hell.

Anſw. 3. Thirdly, we muſt ſearch what is the cauſe of this want of griefe which we complaine of; whether it be not a ſecret cleaving to the creature, and too much contentment in it, which oft ſtealeth away the heart from God, and brings in ſuch contentment as is ſubject to fail and deceive us, whereupon from diſcontentment we grieve, which grief (being carnall) hinders grief of a better kinde.

Cauſes of our want of grief for ſinne.

1. Uſually the cauſes of our want of grief for ſin are theſe. Firſt, a want of ſerious conſideration, and dwelling long enough upon the cauſe of grief, which ſprings either from an unſetledneſſe of nature; or diſtractions from things without. Moveable diſpoſitions are not long affected with any thing. One main uſe of croſſes, is to take the ſoul from that it is dangerouſly

gerously ſet upon, and to fix our running ſpirits. For though griefe for croſſes hinders ſpirituall grief, yet worldly delights hinder more. That grief is leſſe diſtant from true grief, and therefore nearer to be turned into it. Chap. 21.

And put caſe we could call off our mindes from other things; and ſet them on grief for our ſins, yet it is only Gods Spirit that can work our hearts to this grief, and for this end, perhaps God holds us off from it, to teach us, that he is the teacher of the heart to grieve. And thereupon it is our duty to wait, till he reveale our ſelves ſo far to our ſelves, as to ſtir up this affection in us. 2.

Another cauſe may be a kinde of doubleneſſe of heart, whereby we would bring two things together that cannot ſuite. We would grieve for ſin ſo far as we thinke it ſh evidence of a good condition: but then, becauſe it is an irkſome task, and becauſe it cannot be wrought without ſevering our heart from thoſe ſweet delights it is ſet upon: hence we are loth God ſhould take that courſe to worke griefe, which croſſeth our diſpoſition. The ſoule muſt therefore by ſelf- 3.

Chap. 22. Self-denial.

deniall be brought to ſuch a degree of *ſincerity* and *ſimplicity*, as to be willing to give God leave to work *this ſorrow, not to be ſorrowed for*, by what way he himſelfe pleaſeth. But here we muſt remember again, that this *ſelfe-deniall* is not of our ſelves, but of God, who only can take us out of our ſelves, and if our hearts were brought to a ſtooping herein to his work, it would ſtop many a croſſe, and continue many a bleſſing which God is forced to take from us, that he may work that grief in us which he ſeeth would not otherwiſe be kindely wrought.

2 Cor 7. 10.

4. God giveth ſome larger ſpirits, and ſo their ſorrows become larger. Some upon quickneſſe of apprehenſion, and the ready paſſages betwixt the brain and the heart, are quickly moved: where the apprehenſion is deeper, and the paſſages ſlower, there ſorrow is long in working, and long in removing. The deepeſt waters have the ſtilleſt motion. Iron takes fire more ſlowly than ſtubble, but then it holds it longer.

5. Again, *God that ſearcheth and knowes our hearts* (better than our ſelves) *knows when and in what meaſure it is fit for to grieve:*

grieve: He ſees it fitter for ſome diſpoſitions, to goe on in a conſtant grief. We muſt give that honour to the wiſedom of the great Phyſician of ſouls, to know beſt how to mingle and miniſter his potions. And we muſt not be ſo unkinde to take it ill at Gods hands, when he (out of gentleneſſe and forbearance) miniſters not to us that churliſh Phyſicke he doth to others, but cheerfully embrace any potion that he thinkes fit to give us. Chap. 22.

Some holy men have deſired to ſee their ſin in the moſt ugly colours, and God hath heard them in their requeſts. But yet his hand was ſo heavy upon them, that they went alwayes mourning to their very graves; and thought it fitter to leave it to Gods wiſedom to mingle the potion of ſorrow, than to be their own chooſers. For a concluſion then of this Point, If we grieve that we cannot grieve, and ſo far as it is ſinne, make it our griefe: then put it amongſt the reſt of our ſins, which we beg pardon of, and help againſt, and let it not hinder us from going to Chriſt, but drive us to him. For herein lyes the danger of this temptation, that thoſe who

Chap. 22. complaine in this kinde, thinke it should be presumption to goe to Christ: when as he especially calleth *the weary and heavy laden sinner to come unto him*, and therefore such as are sensible that they are not sensible enough of their sinne, must know, *though want of feeling be quite opposite to the life of Grace, yet sensiblenesse of the want of feeling, shews some degree of the life of Grace.* The safest way in this case is, from that life and light that God hath wrought in our soules, to see and feele this want of feeling, to cast our selves and this our indisposition upon the pardoning and healing mercy of God in Christ.

Caution. We speak only of those that are so far displeased with themselves for their ill temper, as they do not for our themselves in it, but are willing to yield to Gods way in redressing it, and do not crosse the Spirit, moving them thus with *David* to check themselves, and to trust in God. Otherwise, an unfeeling and carelesse state of Spirit will breed a secret shame of going to God, for removing of that we are not hearty in labouring against so far as our conscience tels us we are enabled.

The

The moſt conſtant ſtate the ſoule can be in, in regard of ſinne, is, upon judgement to condemne it upon right grounds, and to reſolve againſt it. Whereupon *Repentance* is called *an after-wiſedome and change of the minde*. And this diſpoſition is in Gods Children at all times. And for *affections*, love of that which is *good*, and *hatred* of that which is *evil*: theſe likewiſe have a ſetled continuance in the ſoul. But, *griefe* and *ſorrow* riſe and fall as freſh occaſions are offered, and are more lively ſtirred up upon ſome lively repreſentation to the ſoule of ſome hurt we receive by ſin, and wrong we doe to God in it. The reaſon hereof is, becauſe till the ſoul be ſeparated from the body, theſe affections have more communion with the body, and therefore they carry more outward expreſſions, then diſlike, or abomination in the minde doth. We are to judge of our ſelves more by that which is conſtant, than by that which is ebbing and flowing.

Chap. 22. The moſt conſtant ſtate of the ſoul in regard of ſin.

But what is the reaſon that the affections do not alwayes follow the judgement, and the choice or refuſall of the will? Queſt.

Our ſoule being a finite ſubſtance, is Anſw.

Chap: 22. carried with ſtrength but one way at one time.

2. 2. Sometime God cals us to joy as well as to grief; and then no wonder if griefe be ſomewhat to ſeek.

3. 3. Sometimes when God calleth to grief, and the *judgement* and *will* goeth along with God, yet the heart is not alwaies ready, becauſe (it may be) it hath run out ſo far, that it cannot preſently be called in again.

4. 4. Or, *the ſpirits* (which are the inſtruments of the ſoul) may be ſo waſted, that they cannot hold out to feed a ſtrong griefe: in which caſe, the conſcience muſt reſt in ſetled judgement and hatred of ill; which is the ſureſt and never-failing Character of a good ſoul.

5. 5. *Oft times God in mercy takes us off from griefe and ſorrow, by refreſhing occaſions:* becauſe ſorrow and griefe are affections very much afflicting both of body and ſoul.

Queſt. *When is godly ſorrow in that degree wherein the ſoul may ſtay it ſelf from uncomfortable thoughts about its condition?*

Anſw. 1. *When we finde ſtrength againſt that ſinne which formerly we fell into, and ability to walke*

walke in a contrary way: for this answers Gods end in griefe, one of which, is a prevention from falling for the time to come. For God hath that affection in him which he puts into Parents, which is by smart to prevent their childrens boldnesse of offending for the time to come. Chap. 22.

3. *When that which is wanting in grief is made up in feare.* Here there is no great cause of complaint of the want of grief, for *this holy affection is the awband of the soul*, whereby it is kept from starting from God and his wayes. 2.

3. When after griefe we finde inward peace; for true griefe being Gods work in us, he knowes best how to measure it. Therefore whatsoever frame God brings my soule into, I am to rest in his goodnesse, and not except against his dealing. That peace and joy which riseth from griefe in the use of meanes, and makes the soule more humble and thankfull to God, and lesse censorious and more pitifull to others: is no illusion, nor false light. 3.

The main end of grief and sorrow is, to make us value the grace and mercy of God in Christ, above all the contentments which 4.

sin

Chap. 22.

sin feeds on. Which where it is found, we may know that grief for sinne, hath enough possessed the soule before. The sufficiency of things is to be judged by an answerableness to their use and ends: God makes sin better, that Christ may be sweet: *that measure of grief and sorrow is sufficient, which brings us, and holds us to Christ.*

5. *Hatred*, being the strongest, deepest, and steadiest affection of the soule against that which is evil; Grief for sin is then right, when it springs from hatred, and encreaseth further hatred against it.

How to know that we hate sin rightly.

Now the soule may be knowne to hate sin, when it seeks the utter abolishing of it, for hatred is an implacable and irreconcileable affection.

1. True *hatred* is carried against the whole kinde of sin, without respect of any wrong done to us, but only out of a meer *Antipathy*, and contrariety of disposition to it. As the Lambe hateth the whole kinde of Wolves, and man hateth the whole kinde of Serpents. A Toad does us no harme, but yet we hate it.

2. That which is hateful to us, the nearer it is, the more we shun and abhorre it, as

3. venemous

venemous Serpents, and hurtfull creatures, becauſe the neerneſſe of the object affects us more deeply. Therefore, if our grief ſpring from true hatred of ſin, it will make no new league with it, but grieve for all ſin, eſpecially for our own particular ſins, as being contrary to the work of Gods grace in us, then is grief an affection of the new creature, and every way of the right breed. Chap. 22.

But for fuller ſatisfaction in this caſe, we muſt know *there is ſometimes grief for ſinne in us, when we think there is none*: it wants but ſtirring up by ſome quickning word; the remembrance of Gods favours and our unkindeneſs, or the awaking of our conſciences by ſome croſſe, will raiſe up this affection feelingly in us. As in the affection of *love* many think that they have no love to God at all: yet let God be diſhonoured in his *name, truth*, or *children*, and their love will ſoon ſtir and appear in juſt anger. 4.

In want of griefe for ſinne, we muſt remember, 1. *That we muſt have this affection from God, before we can bring it unto God.* What we muſt do in want of grief for ſin 1.

And therefore, in the ſecond place, 2.

Our

Chap. 22. Our chiefe care ſhould be not to harden our hearts againſt the motions of the Spirit, ſtirring us to ſeaſonable griefe, for that may cauſe a *judiciall hardneſſe* from God. God oft inflicteth ſome ſpirituall judgement (as a correction upon men) for not yeelding to his Spirit at the firſt, they feel a hardneſſe of heart growing upon them: This made the Church complain, *Why haſt thou hardened our hearts from thy fear?* Which if Chriſtians did well conſider, they would more carefully entertain ſuch impreſſions of ſorrow, as the Spirit in the uſe of the means, and obſervation of Gods dealing towards themſelves or others, ſhall work in them, then they doe. It is a ſaying of *Auſtin*, *Let a man grieve for his ſin, and joy for his griefe*, Though we can neither love, nor grieve, nor joy of our ſelves, as we ſhould, yet our hearts tell us, we are often guilty of giving a check to the Spirits ſtirring theſe affections in us, which is a maine cauſe of the many ſharp afflictions we endure in this life, though Gods love in the main matter of ſalvation be moſt firm unto us.

3. We muſt not thinke to have all this grief

grief at first, and at once, for oftentimes it is deeper after a sight and feeling of Gods love then it was before. God is a free Agent, and knows every mans severall mould, and the severall services he is to use them in, and oft takes liberty afterwards to humble men more (when he hath enabled them better to bear it) then in their first entrance into Religion: Grief before springs commonly from self-love, and fear of danger. Let no man suspect his estate because God spares him in the beginning. For Christians many times meet with greater tryall after their conversion than ever they thought on. *When men take little fines, they meane to take the greater rent.* God will have his children first or last to feel what sinne is; and how much they are beholding to him for Christ.

This grief doth not alwaies arise from poring on sinne, but by oft considering of the infinite goodnesse of God in Christ, and thereby reflecting on our own unworthinesse, not onely in regard of sinne past, but likewise of the sin that hangeth upon us, and issues daily from us. The more holy a man is, the more he sees the holinesse

Chap. 22.

neſſe of Gods nature, with whom he deſires to have communion, the more he is grieved that there ſhould be any thing found in him, diſpleaſing to ſo pure a Majeſty.

And as all our grief comes not at firſt, ſo God will not have it come all at once, but to be a ſtream alwaies running, fed with a ſpring, yet within the banks, though ſometimes deeper, ſometimes ſhallower. Grief for ſin is like a conſtant ſtream; grief for other things is like a torrent, or ſwelling *waters*, which are ſoon up, ſoon down; what it wants in greatneſſe is made up in continuance.

4. Againe, *If we watch not our Nature, there will be a ſpice of Popery* (which is a natural Religion) *in this great deſire of more griefe*: as if we had that, then we had ſomething to ſatisfie God withall, and ſo, our mindes will run too much upon workes. This grief muſt not onely be wrought by God revealing our ſin, and his mercy unto us in Chriſt; But when it is wrought, we muſt altogether reſt (in a ſenſe of our own emptineſs) upon the full ſatisfaction and worthineſs of Chriſt our Saviour.

All

All this that hath been ſaid, tends not to the abating of our deſire to have a tender and bleeding heart for ſin: but that in the purſuit of this deſire, we be not caſt down ſo as to queſtion our eſtates, if we feel not that meaſure of grief which we deſire and endeavour after: Or, to refuſe our portion of joy which God offers us in Chriſt. Conſidering grief is no further good than it makes way for joy: which cauſed our Saviour to joyn them together: *Bleſſed are the mourners, for they ſhall be comforted.* Being thus diſpoſed, we may commit our ſouls to God in peace, notwithſtanding Satans troubling of us in the hour of temptation.

CHAP. XXIII.

Other ſpiritual cauſes of the ſoules trouble, diſcovered, and removed: and objections anſwered.

ANother thing that diſquiets and caſts down the ſoul very much, is that inward conflict betwixt grace and corruption: this makes us moſt work, and puts us to moſt diſquietment. It is the trouble of

Chap. 23.

of troubles to have two inhabitants so near in one soul, and these to strive one against another, in every action, and at all times in every part and power in us: the one carrying us upward, higher and higher still, till we come to God: the other pulling us lower and lower, further from him. *This cannot but breed a great disquiet, when a Christian shall be put on to that which he would not, and hindred from that which he would doe, or troubled in the performance of it.* The more light there is to discern, and life of Grace to be sensible hereof; and the more love of Christ, and desire from love to be like to him, the more irksome will this be: no wonder then that the Apostle cryed out, *O wretched man that I am*, &c.

Rom. 7.

Rom. 7.

Here is a speciall use of Trust, in the free mercy of God in *justification* (considering all is stained that comes from us) it is one maine end of Gods leaving us in this conflicting condition, that we may live and die by faith in the perfect righteousnesse of Christ, whereby we glorifie God more, than if we had perfect righteousnesse of our own. Hereby likewise we are driven to make use of all the promises

miſes of Grace, and to truſt in God for the performance of them, in ſtrengthning his own party in us, and not only to truſt in God for particular graces, but for his Spirit which is the ſpring of all graces, which we have through and from Chriſt: who will help us in this *fight*, until he hath made us like himſelf. We are under the government of Grace, ſinne is depoſed from the rule it had, and ſhall never recover the right it had again; *It is left in us for matter of exerciſe, and ground of triumph.* Chap. 23.

Oh (ſay ſome) *I ſhall never hold out, as good give over at firſt as at laſt, I finde ſuch ſtrong inclinations to ſinne in me, and ſuch weakneſſe to reſiſt temptation, that I feare I ſhall but ſhame the cauſe; I ſhall one day periſh by the hand of Satan, ſtrengthning my corruption.* *Queſt.* Of perſeverance to the end, anſwered.

Why art thou thus troubled? *Truſt in God*, Grace will be above nature, God above the devil, the Spirit above the fleſh. Be ſtrong in the Lord, the battell is his, and the victory ours before-hand. If we fought in our owne cauſe and ſtrength, and with our weapons, it were ſomething: but as we fight in the power of God, ſo *Anſw.*

Chap. 23.

are *we kept by that mighty power through faith unto salvation.* It lyes upon the faithfulneſſe of Chriſt, to put us into that poſſeſſion of glory which he hath purchaſed for us: therefore charge the ſoule to make uſe of the promiſes, and relye upon God for perfecting the good work that he hath begun in thee.

Corruptions be ſtrong, but ſtronger is he that is in us, then that corruption that is in us. When we are weake in our own ſenſe, then are we ſtrong in him, who perfecteth ſtrength in our weakneſſe felt and acknowledged. Our corruptions are Gods enemies as well as ours, and therefore in *truſting* to him, and *fighting* againſt them, we may be ſure he will take our part againſt them.

Object. *But I have great impediments, and many diſcouragements in my Chriſtian courſe.*

Anſw. What if our impediments be *Mountains*, faith is able to remove them; *Who art thou O mountain?* (ſaith the Prophet) What a world of impediments were there betwixt *Ægypt* and the Land of *Canaan*, betwixt the return out of *Babylon* and *Jeruſalem?* yet Faith removed all, by looking to Gods power and truth in his promiſe.

Zac. 4. 7.

promiſe. The looking too much to the *Anakims* and *Gyants*, and too little to Gods Omnipotency, ſhut the Iſraelites out of *Canaan*, and put God to his oath, that they ſhould *never enter into his reſt*, and it will exclude our ſoules from happineſſe at length, if looking too much upon theſe *Anakims* within us and without us, we baſely deſpaire and give over the field, conſidering all our enemies are not onely conquered for us by our *Head*, but ſhall be conquered in us, ſo that in *ſtrength* of aſſiſtance we fight againſt them. God gave the Iſraelites enemies into their hands, but yet they muſt fight it out, and what coward will not fight when he is ſure of help and victory? Chap. 25. Pſa. 25.

But I carry continually about me a corrupt heart, if that were once changed, I could have ſome comfort. Object.

A new heart is Gods creature, and he hath promiſed to *create it in us*. A creating power cannot only bring ſomething out of nothing, but contrary out of contrary. Where we are ſure of Gods truth, let us never queſtion that power to which all things are poſſible. If our hearts were as ill, as God is powerfull and good, Anſw.

Chap. 23.

there were ſome ground of diſcouragement. In what meaſure we give up our hearts to God, in that meaſure we are ſure to receive them better. That grace which enlargeth the heart to deſire good, is therefore given, that God may encreaſe it, being both a part and a pledge of further grace. There is a promiſe of powring *clean water* upon us, which faith muſt ſue out. Chriſt hath taken upon him to purge his Spouſe, and make her fit for himſelf. Eph. 5.

Queſt. *But I have many wants and defects to be ſupplyed.*

Anſw. It pleaſeth him, that in Chriſt *all fulneſs ſhall dwell*, from whoſe fulneſs grace ſufficient is diſpenſed to us, anſwerable to the meaſure of our *faith*, whereby we fetch it from the fountain. The more we *truſt*, the more we have. When we look therefore to our own want, we ſhould look withall to Chriſts *fulneſs*, and his nearneſs to us, and take advantage from our miſery, to reſt upon his *all-ſufficiency*, whoſe fulneſs is ours, as *himſelfe* is. Our fulneſs with our life is hid in Chriſt, and diſtilled into us, in ſuch meaſure as his wiſedome thinketh fit, and as ſheweth him to be a free *agent*, and yet ſo as the blame for want of grace lyeth

lyeth upon us, seeing he is before-hand with us in his offers of grace, and our own consciences will tell us, that our failings are more from cherishing of some lust, then from unwillingness in him to supply us with grace. Chap. 23.

But God is of pure eyes, and cannot endure such services as I perform. Quest.

Though God be of pure eyes, yet he looks upon us in *him* who is *blameless* and *without spot*, who by vertue of his sweet smelling sacrifice, appears for us in heaven, and mingles his odours with our services, and in him will God be known to us by the name of a kinde Father, not only in pardoning our defects, but accepting our endeavours. We offer our services to *God*, not in our own name, but in the name of our *high-Priest*, who takes them from us, and presents them to his Father, as stirred up by his spirit, and perfumed by his obedience. *Jonas* his prayer was mingled with a great deal of passion and imperfection, yet God could discern something of his own in it, and pity and pardon the rest. Answ.

Chap. 24.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of outward troubles disquieting the ſpirit: and comforts in them.

AS for the outward evils that we meet withall in this life, they are either
1. *ſuch,* 1. *As deprive us of the comforts our nature is ſupported withall;* or elſe,
2. 2. *they bring ſuch miſery upon our nature an condition that hinders our well-being in this world.*

1. For the firſt, Truſt in God, and take out of his all-ſufficiency whatſoever we want. Sure we are by his promiſe, that we ſhall want nothing that is good. What he takes away one way, he can give another, what he takes away in one hand, he can give another, what he withholds one way, he can ſupply in a better. Whatſoever comfort we have in goods, friends, health, or any other bleſſings, it is all conveyed by *him*; who ſtill remains, though theſe be taken from us. And we have him bound in many promiſes for all that is needfull for us. We may ſue him upon his own bond; Can we think that he who will give us a Kingdom, will fail us in neceſſa-

ry provision to bring us thither, who himself is our portion?

As for those miseries which our weak nature is subject to, they are all under Christ, they come and goe at his command, they are his messengers sent for our good, and called back againe when they have done what they came for. Therefore look not so much upon them, as to him for strength and comfort in them, mitigation of them, and grace to profit by them. Chap. 24. 2.

To strengthen our faith the more in God, he calleth himselfe, a *Buckler* for defence from ill, and an *exceeding great reward* for a supply of all good. A *Sun* for the one, and a *Shield* for the other. Trust him then with health, wealth, good name, all that thou hast. It is not in man to take away that from us which God will give us, and keep for us. It is not in mans power to make others conceive what they please of us.

Among crosses, this is that which disquieteth not the minde least, to be deceived in matter of trust, when as if we had not trusted, we had not been *deceived*. The very feare of being disappointed,

Chap. 24. Psal. 116.

made *David* in his haste think *all men were lyars.* But as it is a sharp crosse, so nothing will drive us nearer unto God, who never faileth his.

Job 6. 15.

Friends often prove as the *Reed of Ægypt*, as a *broken staffe*, and as a *deceitfull Brooke*, that failes the weary passenger in Summer time, when there is most need of refreshing; and it is the unhappiness of men otherwise happy in the world, that during their prosperous condition, they know not who be their friends, for when their condition declines, it plainely appeares, that many were friends of their estates, and not of their persons: But when men will know us least, God will know us most, he knowes our soules in *adversity*, and knowes them so as to support and comfort them, and that from the spring-head of comfort, whereby the sweetest comforts are fetcht. What God conveyed before by friends, that he doth now instill immediately from himselfe. The immediate comforts are the strongest comforts, Our Saviour Christ told his Disciples, that they would *leave him alone, yet* (saith he) *I am not alone, but the Father is with me.* At S. *Pauls* first appealing

Chap. 24.

ing *all forsook him*, but *the Lord stood by him*. He wants no company that hath Christ for his companion. *I looked for some to take pity* (saith *David*) *but there was none*. This unfaithfulness of man is a foile to set out Gods truth, who is never nearer then when trouble is neareſt, There is not so much as a shadow of *change* in him or his love.

Comfort in departure of friends.

It is just with God when we lay too much weight of confidence upon any creature, to let us have the greater fall; Man may fail us and yet be a good man, but God cannot fail us and be God, because he is truth it self. Shall God be so true to us, and shall not we be true to him and his truth?

The like may be said in the departure of our friends. Our life is oft too much in the life of others, which God takes unkindely: How many friends have we in him alone? who rather then wee shall want friends, can make our enemies our friends. A true beleever is to Christ as his *Mother*, *Brother*, and *Sister*, because he carries that affection to them, as if they were *Mother*, *Brother*, and *Sister* to him indeed. As Christ makes us all to him,

so

Chap. 24.

so should we make him all in all to our selves. If all comforts in the world were dead, we have them still in the living Lord.

Comfort in sickness.

Sicknesses are harbingers of death, and in the apprehension of many they be the greatest troubles, and tame great spirits, that nothing else could tame; herein we are more to deale with God than with men, which is one comfort sickness yeeldeth above other troubles. It is better to be troubled with the distempers of our own bodies, than with the distempers of other mens souls; In which we have not only to deale with men, but with the devil himselfe, that ruleth in the humors of men.

Means not to be relied on.

The example of *Asa* teaches us in this case not to lay too much trust upon the Physician, but with *Hezekiah* first looke up to God, and then use the meanes. If God will give us a *quietus est*, and take us off from business by sickness, then we have a time of serving God by patient subjection to his will. If he means to use our service any further, he will *restore* our health and strength to doe that worke he sets us about. Health is at his command, and

and ſickneſſe ſtayes at his rebuke. In the meane, the time of ſickneſſe is a time of purging from that defilement we gathered in our health, till we come purer out; which ſhould move us the rather willingly to abide Gods time. Bleſſed is that ſickneſſe that proves the health of the ſoule. We are beſt, for the moſt part, when we are weakeſt. Then it appears what good proficients we have been in time of health.

Carnall men are oft led along by falſe hopes ſuggeſted by others, and cheriſhed by themſelves, that they ſhall live ſtill, and do well, till death comes, and cuts off their vain confidence, and their life both at once, before ever they are acquainted what it is to truſt in God aright, in the uſe of means. We ſhould labour to learn of S. *Paul* in deſperate caſes, *to receive the ſentence of death*, and not to truſt *in our ſelves*, but in God *that raiſeth the dead*. He that raiſeth our dead bodies out of the grave, can raiſe our diſeaſed bodies out of the bed of ſickneſſe, if he hath a pleaſure to ſerve himſelf by us.

In all kinde of troubles, it is not the ingredients that God puts into the Cup

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Chap. 24.

so much afflicts us, as the ingredients of our distempered passions mingled with them. The sting and coar of them all is sin: when that is not only pardoned, but in some measure healed, and the proud flesh eaten out, then a healthy soul will bear any thing. After repentance, that trouble that before was a correction, becomes now a tryall and exercise of grace. *Strike Lord* (saith *Luther*) *I bear any thing willingly, because my sins are forgiven.* We should not be cast down so much about outward troubles, as about sin, that both procures them, and invenomes them. We see by experience, when conscience is once set at liberty, how chearfully men will go under any burthen: therefore labour to keep out sin, and then let come what will come.

It is the fooliſh wisedom of the world to prevent trouble by sin, which is the way indeed to pull the greatest trouble upon us. For sinne dividing betwixt God and us, moveth him to leave the soule to intangle it selfe in its own wayes. When the conscience is cleare, then there is nothing between God and us, to hinder our trust. Outward troubles rather drive us nearer

nearer unto God, and ſtand with his love. But ſin defileth the ſoul, and ſets it further from God. *It is well-doing* that enables us to commit our ſouls cheerfully unto him. Whatſoever our outward condition be, *if our hearts condemn us not*, we may have *boldneſſe with God*. In any trouble our care ſhould be, not to avoid the trouble: but ſinful miſcarriage in and about the trouble, and ſo *truſt God*. It is a heavy condition to be under the burthen of trouble, and under the burthen of a guilty conſcience both at once. When men will *walk in the light of their own fire*, and *the ſparkes which they have kindled themſelves*, it is juſt with God that *they ſhould lie down in ſorrow*.

Whatſoever injuries we ſuffer from thoſe that are ill affected to us, let us commit our cauſe to the *God of vengeance*, and not meddle with his Prerogative. He will revenge our cauſe better than we can, and more perhaps than we deſire. The wronged ſide is the ſafer ſide. If inſtead of meditating revenge, we can ſo overcome our ſelves, as to pray for our enemies, and deſerve well of them, we ſhall both ſweeten our owne ſpirits, and

prevent

Chap. 44.

prevent a ſharp temptation which we are prone unto, and have an undoubted argument that we are ſons of that Father that doth good to his enemies, and members of that Saviour that prayed for his perſecutors. And withall by *heaping coals* upon our enemies, ſhall melt them either to converſion, or to confuſion.

Comfort in the hour of death.

But the greateſt tryall of truſt is in our laſt encounter with death, wherein we ſhall finde not onely a deprivation of all comforts in this life, but a confluence of all ill at once, but we muſt know, God will be the God of his unto death, and not onely unto death, but in death. We may truſt God the Father with our bodies and ſouls which he hath created; and God the Sonne, with the bodies and ſoules which hee hath redeemed: and the holy Spirit, with thoſe bodies and ſoules that he hath ſanctified. Wee are not diſquieted when wee put off our cloathes and goe to bed, becauſe we truſt Gods ordinary providence to raiſe us up againe. And why ſhould we be diſquieted when we put off our bodies, and ſleep our laſt ſleep, conſidering we are more ſure to riſe out of our graves, than

out

out of our beds? Nay, we are raised up already in Christ our head: *who is the resurrection and the life*, in whom we may triumph over death, that triumpheth over the greatest Monarchs as a disarmed and conquered Enemy. Death is the death of it selfe, and not of us. If we would have faith ready to die by, we must exercise it well in living by it, and then it will no more fail us than the good things we lay hold on by it, until it hath brought us into heaven, where that office of it is laid aside: here is the prerogative of a true Christian above an Hypocrite and a worldling, when as their trust, and the thing they trust in, fails them, then a true beleevers trust, stands him in greatest stead. Chap. 24.

In regard of our *State after death*, a Christian need not be disquieted, for the *Angels* are ready to doe their office in carrying his soule to *Paradise*, those Mansions *prepared for him*. His Saviour will be his Judge, and the Head will not condemn the members: *then* he is to receive the fruit and end of his Faith, the reward of his Hope; which is so great and so sure, that our trusting in God for that, strengthneth Comfort from the state after death.

Chap. 42.

neth the heart to trust him for all other things in our passage; so that the refreshing of our faith in these great things, refreshes its dependence upon God for all things here below. And how strong helps have we to uphold our *faith* in those great things which we are not able to conceive of, till we come to possess them? Is not our husband there? and hath he not taken possession for us? Doth he not keep our place for us? Is not our flesh there in him? and his Spirit below with us? have we not some first-fruits and earnest of it before-hand? Is not Christ now a fitting and preparing of us daily, for what he hath prepared and keeps for us? Whither tends all we meet with in this world, that comes betwixt us and heaven, as desertions, inward conflicts, outward troubles, and death at last, but to fit us for a better condition hereafter, and by faith therein to stir up a strong desire after it? *Comfort one another with these things*, saith the Apostle, these be the things will comfort the soul.

1 Thes. 4.

CHAP.

Chap. 25.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the defects of gifts, disquieting the soule. As also the afflictions of the Church.

AMong other things, there is nothing more disquiets a Christian, that is called to the fellowship of Christ and his Church here, and to glory hereafter, than that he sees himselfe unfurnished with those gifts that are fit for the calling of a Saint; As likewise for that particular standing and place wherein God hath set him in this world, by being a member of a body politick,

Comfort in regard of our generall calling.

For our Christian calling, we must know that Christianity is a matter rather of Grace then of gifts, of obedience than of parts. *Gifts* may come from a more common worke of the Spirit, they are common to castawaies, and are more for others than for our selves. *Grace* comes from a peculiar favour of God, and especially for our own good. In the same duty, where there is required gifts and grace (as in *prayer*) one may perform it with evidence of greater grace, than ano-

Chap. 25. Exod. 7.11

ther of greater parts. *Moses* (a man not of the best speech) was chosen before *Aaron*, to speake to God, and to strive with him by Prayer, whilest *Israel* fought with *Amalek* with the sword. It is a businesse more of the heart then of the tongue, more of groanes then of words, which groanes and sighes, the Spirit will alwayes stirre up even in the worst condition. Yet for parts there is no member, but it is fitted with some abilities, to doe service in the body, and by faith may grow up to a greater measure, For God calls none to that high condition, but whom in some measure he fits to be an useful member, and endues with a publike spirit.

But that is the measure which Christ thinkes fit; who will make up that in the body, which is wanting in any particular member. God will encrease the measure of our gifts, as occasion shall be offered to draw them forth: for there is not the greatest, but may have use both of the parts and graces of the meanest in the Church. And here the soule may by a spirit of faith goe to God in this manner: Lord, the estate of Christianity unto

which thy love in Christ hath called and advanced me, is an high condition; and there is need of a great measure of grace, to uphold the credit and comfort of it. Whom thou calleſt unto it, thou doſt in ſome meaſure furniſh to walke worthy of it. Let this be an evidence to my ſoul of the truth of thy call, that I am enabled by the Spirit for thoſe duties that are required; in confidence of which aſſiſtance, I will ſet upon the worke: *Thou haſt promiſed to give wiſedome to them that aſk it, and to upbraid none with their unworthineſſe. Nay, thou haſt promiſed the Spirit of all grace to thoſe that beg it*; it is that which I need, and it is no more then thou haſt promiſed. Chap. 25. Jam. 1. 5.

Onely it muſt be remembred, that we doe not walke above our parts and graces, the iſſue whereof will be diſcouragement in our ſelves, and diſgrace from others. *Caution.*

The like may be ſaid for our *particular* calling, wherein we are to expreſſe the graces of our Chriſtian calling, and *ſerve one another in love*, as members of the *State* as well as of the *Church*, therefore every one muſt have 1. a calling, 2. a Directions for a comfortable uſe of our particular calling. Gal. 5. 13.

Chap. 25. *Parer negotio.*

lawfull, 3. a uſefull calling, 4. a calling fitted for his parts, that he may be even for his buſineſſe. 5. a lawfull entrance, and calling thereunto, 6. and a lawfull demeanour in the ſame. Though the Orb and Sphere we walk in be little, yet we muſt keep within the bounds of it, becauſe for our carriage in that, we muſt give a ſtrict account, and there is no calling ſo mean, but a man ſhall find enough to give a good account for. Our care muſt be to know our work, and then to doe it and ſo to doe it, as if it were unto God, with conſcience of moderate diligence for over-doing, and over-working any thing, comes either from oſtentation or diſtruſt in God: And negligence is ſo farre from getting any bleſſing, that it brings us under a *curſe* for *doing Gods work negligently*. For we muſt think our callings to be ſervices of God, who hath appointed us our ſtanding therein.

Jer. 48. 10.

That which belongs to us in our calling, is care of diſcharging our duty; that which God takes upon him, is aſſiſtance and good ſucceſſe in it. Let us doe our worke, and leave God to doe his owne. Diligence and truſt in him is onely ours,

the

the reſt of the burthen is his. In a Family the Fathers and the Maſters care is the greateſt, the childes care is only to obey, and the ſervants to do his worke, care of proviſion and protection doth not trouble them. Moſt of our diſquietneſſe in our calling is, that we trouble our ſelves about Gods work. Truſt God and be doing, and let him alone with the reſt. He ſtands upon his credit ſo much, that it ſhall appeare we have not truſted him in vain, even when we ſee no appearance of doing any good. *Peter* fiſhed all night and catched nothing, yet upon Chriſts word he caſts in his net again, and caught ſo many fiſh as brake this net. Covetouſneſſe (when men will be richer than God would have them) troubles all, *it troubles the houſe*, the whole family, and the houſe within us our precious ſoul, which ſhould be a quiet houſe for Gods *Spirit to dwell in*, whoſe ſeat is a quiet ſpirit. If men would follow Chriſts method, and *ſeek firſt the Kingdome of heaven*, all other things would be caſt upon them. If thoughts of inſufficiency in our places diſcourage us, remember what God ſaith to *Moſes*, when he pretended diſability to

Chap. 23.

Luk. 5. 6.

Mat. 6. 33.

Chap 25. Exo. 4 11.

ſpeak, *Who hath made mans mouth, have not I the Lord?* All our ſufficiency for every calling is from God.

Object.

But you will ſay, *Though by Gods bleſſing my particular condition be comfortable, yet the ſtate of Gods people abroad, and the miſeries of the times diſquiet me.*

Anſw.

We complaine of the times, but let us take heed we be not a part of the miſery of the times: that they be not the worſe for us. Indeed he is a dead member that takes not to heart the ill of the times, yet here is place for that *complaint, Help Lord.* In theſe tempeſts do as the Diſciples did, Cry to Chriſt to rebuke the tempeſts and ſtorms, This is the day of *Jacobs* trouble, let it alſo be the day of *Jacobs* truſt; let the body do as the head did in the like caſe, and in time it ſhall be with the body as it is with the head.

Hab. 3. Pſa. 12.

Comfort in regard of the afflictions of the Church.

In this caſe it is good to lay before God all the promiſes made to his Church, with the examples of his preſence in it, and deliverance of the ſame in former times. God is never nearer his Church then when trouble is neer: when in earth they conclude an utter overthrow, God is in heaven concluding a glorious deliverance:

rance: usually after the lowest ebbe, follows the highest spring-tide. Christ stands upon *Mount Zion*. There is a Counsel in heaven, that will dash the mould of all contrary Counsels on earth; and which is more, God will work the raising of the Church by that very means by which his enemies seek to ruine it. *Let us stand still and behold the salvation of the Lord.* God gave too dear a price for his Church, to suffer it long in the hands of mercilesse enemies. Chap. 25.

As for the seeming flourishing of the enemies of Gods Church, it is but for a time, and that a short time, and a measured time. *The wicked plot against the just*, they are *plotters* and *plowers of mischief*; they are skilfull and industrious in it, but they reap their owne ruine. *Their day is a coming*, and *their pit is in digging*; take heed therefore of *fretting*, because of the man *that bringeth wicked devices to passe*. for *the armes of the wicked shall be broken*, We should helpe our faith by observing Gods executing of judgement in this kinde. It cannot but vex the enemies of the Church, to see at length a disappointing of their projects, but then to see the Psa. 37.12. Job 4.8. Psa. 37.12. Psa. 94.13. Psa.37.7. Psa. 37.17. Reade Psalmes 10. 37. 94. 129.&c.

Chap. 25.

mould of all their devices turned upon their owne heads, will more torment them.

Psal. 73.

In this case, it will much comfort to goe into the Sanctuary, for there wee shall be able to say, *Yet God is good to Israel.* God hath an Ark for his, there is no condition so ill, but there is Balme in *Gilead*, comfort in *Israel*. *The depths of misery are never beyond the depths of mercy.* God oft for this very end, strips his Church of all helps below, that it may only rely upon him: and that it may appear that the Church is ruled by an higher power than it is opposed by. And *then is the time when we may expect great deliverances of the Church, when there is a great faith in the great God.*

From all that hath been said, we see that the only way to quiet the soule is, to lay a charge upon it to trust God, and that unquietnesse and impatiency, are symptomes and discoveries of an unbeleeving heart.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of divine reasons in a Beleever. Of his minding to praise God, more than to be delivered.

TO go on [*I shall yet praise him.*] In these words *David* expresseth the reasons and grounds of his trust, namely from the interest he had in God by experience and speciall Covenant: wherein in general we may observe, that those who truly trust in God, labour to back their faith with sound arguments, faith is an understanding grace, it knows *whom* it trusts, and *for what*, and upon what grounds it trusts: *Reason* of it selfe cannot finde what we should beleeve, yet when God hath discovered the same, faith tels us there is great reason to beleeve it; faith useth reason (though not as a ground, yet) as a sanctified instrument to finde out Gods grounds, that it may rely upon them. He beleeves best, that knows best why he should beleeve; Confidence, and love, and other affections of the soul, though they have no reason grafted in them, yet thus farre they are reasona-

Back faith with strong reason.

Chap. 26.

reasonable, as that they are in a wise man raised up, guided, and laid downe with reason; or else men were neither to be blamed nor praised for ordering their affections aright; whereas not only civill vertue, but *grace* it self is especially conversant in ruling the affections by sanctified reason.

The soule guides the *will* and *affections* otherwise then it doth the outward members of the body. It swayes the affections of *confidence*, *love*, *joy*, &c. as a Prince doth his wiser Subjects, and as Counsellors do a well ordered State by ministring reasons to them; but the soul governs the outward members by command, as a master doth a slave, his will is enough. The hand and foot move upon command, without regarding any reason; but we will not *trust* and rejoyce in God without *reason*, or a shew of reason at the least.

Stat pro ratione voluntas.

Sin hath its reason.

Sinne it selfe never wanted a reason, such as it is, but we call it unreasonable, because it hath no good reason for it; for *reason* being a beame of God, cannot strengthen any work of darknesse. God having made man an understanding creature,

ture, guides him by a way ſutable to ſuch a condition, and that is the reaſon why God in mercy yeelds ſo *far* to us in his word, as to give us ſo many reaſons of our affiance in him. What is encouragement and comfort, but a demonſtration to us of greater reaſons to raiſe us up, then there are to caſt us down?

Chap. 26.

Davids reaſons (here) are drawn partly from ſome *promiſe* of deliverance, and partly from Gods *nature* and *dealing* with him, *whom*, as he had formerly found an *healing*, and a *ſaving God*, ſo he expects to finde him ſtill; and partly from the *covenant of grace*, he is *my God*.

The chief of his reaſons are fetched from God, what he is in *himſelf*, and what he is and will be *to his children*, and what to him in particular; though godly men have *reaſons* for their *truſt*, yet thoſe reaſons be divine and ſpirituall as faith it ſelf is; for as naturally as beams come from the Sunne, and branches from the root, even ſo by divine diſcourſe one truth iſſueth from another. And as the beames and the Sunne, as the root and branches are all of one nature, ſo the grounds of comfortable truths, and

reaſons

Chap. 26. & godly mans reasons are divine.

reasons taken from those grounds, are both of the same divinity and authority, though in time of temptation discourse is oft so troubled, that it cannot see how one truth riseth from another; this is one priviledge of *heaven*, that our knowledge there shall not be so much *discoursive*, proving one thing by another, as *definitive*, seeing things in their *grounds* with a more present view: the soul being then raised and enlarged to a present conceiving of things, and there being no flesh and bloud in vs to raise objections that must be satisfied with reasoning.

Sometimes in a clearer state of the soule, faith hath not so much use of reasons, but upon neer and sweet communion with God, and by reason of some likenesse between the soul that hath a divine nature stamped upon it, that soul presently without any long discourse, runneth to God as it were by a supernaturall instinct, as by a naturall instinct a child runneth to his Father in any distress. Yea, and from that common light of nature, which discovereth there is a God, even naturall men in extremities will run to God, and God as the Author of nature will

will ſometimes heare them, as he doth the young *Ravens* that cry unto him; but comfortably, and with aſſurance onely thoſe have a familiar recourſe unto him, that have a ſanctified ſutable diſpoſition unto God, as being well acquainted with him.

Sometimes againe *faith* is put to it to uſe reaſons to ſtrengthen it ſelf, and therefore the ſoul ſtudieth arguments to help it ſelfe by, either from inward ſtore laid up in the ſoule, or elſe it hearkeneth and yeelds to reaſon ſuggeſted by others; and there is no gracious heart but hath a frame ſutable and agreeable to any holy and comfortable truth that ſhall bee brought and enforced upon it; there is ſomething in his ſpirit that anſwers what ever comes from the Spirit of God: though perhaps it never heard of it before, yet it preſently claims kindred of it, as comming from the ſame bleſſed Spring, the holy Spirit; and therefore a gracious heart ſooner takes comfort than another, as being prepared to cloſe with it.

The *Reaſons* here brought by *David*, are not ſo much arguments to convince his

Chap. 26.

his judgement, as motives and inducements to incline his will to truſt in God: for truſting being a holy relying upon God, carrieth eſpecially the will to him; now the will is led with the goodneſſe of things, as the underſtanding is led with truth; the heart muſt be ſweetned with conſideration of love and mercy in him whom we truſt, as well as convinced of his ability to do us good, the cords that draw the heart to truſt, are the *cords of love*, and the cords of love are eſpecially the love of him to us whom we love; and therefore the moſt prevailing reaſons that carry the whole heart, are ſuch as are drawn from the ſweetneſſe of God, whereby the heart is opened and enlarged to expect all good, and nothing but good from him.

But we muſt remember that neither *reaſons* from the truth and power of God, nor *inducements* or allurements from the goodneſſe of God, will further prevaile with the ſoule, then it hath a freſh light and reliſh brought into it by the Spirit of God, ro diſcern of thoſe reaſons, and anſwer the contrary.

[*I will praiſe him.*] *David* here mindes praiſing

praising of God more than his owne *deliverie*, becauſe he knew his owne delivery was intended on Gods part, that he might be *glorified*. It is an argument of an excellent ſpirit, when all ſelf-reſpects are drowned in the glory of God; and there is nothing loſt therein; for our beſt being is in God. A Chriſtian begins with loving God for himſelfe; but he ends in loving himſelfe in and for God: and ſo his end, and Gods end, and the end of all things elſe, concentre and agree in one. We may ayme at our owne good, ſo we bring our hearts to referre it to the chief good, as a leſſe circle may well be contained in a greater, ſo that the *lines* drawn from both circles, meet in one middle point. It is an excellent ground of ſincerity to deſire the favour of God, not ſo much out of ſelf-aymes, as that God may have the more free and full praiſe from us, conſidering the ſoule is never more fit for that bleſſed duty, than when is is in a cheerfull plight. Chap. 22.

It rejoyced *David* more that he ſhould have a large heart to ſerve God, than that he ſhould have enlargement of condition. Holy diſpoſitions think not ſo much of

the

Chap. 23.

the time to come, that it will be ſweet to them, as that it will further Gods praiſe. True grace raiſeth the ſoule above ſelfe-reſpects, and reſteth not till it comes to the chiefe end wherein its happineſſe conſiſts.

God is glorified in making us happy, and we (enjoying happineſſe) muſt glorifie God. Although God condeſcend ſo low unto us, as not onely to allow us, but to enjoyne us to look to our owne freedome from miſery, and enjoyment of happineſſe, yet a ſoule throughly ſeaſoned with *grace*, mounteth higher, and is carried with pure reſpects to advance Gods glory; yea ſometimes ſo farre, as to forget its own happineſſe, it reſpects it ſelfe for God, rather than God for it ſelfe. A heavenly ſoul is never ſatisfied, untill it be as neare God as is attaineable. And the nearer a creature comes to God, the more it is emptied of it ſelf, and all ſelf-aymes. Our happineſſe is more in him, than in our ſelves. *We ſeeke our ſelves moſt when we deny our ſelves moſt.* And the more we labour to advance God, the more we advance our own condition in him.

[I

[*I will praiſe*] *David* thinks of his own *duty* in praiſing God, more than of *Gods work* in delivering him: Let us thinke of what is our duty, and God will think of what ſhall be for our comfort; we ſhall feel God anſwering what we looke for from him, in doing what he expects from us. Can we have ſo mean thoughts of him, as that we ſhould intend his glory, and he not much more intend our good? Chap. 26.

This ſhould be a ſtrong plea unto us in our prayers, to prevaile with God, when we engage our ſelves upon the revelation of his mercy to us, to yeeld him all the praiſes. Lord, as the benefit and comfort ſhall be mine, ſo the praiſes ſhall be thine.

It is little leſſe than blaſphemy to praiſe God for that which by unlawfull ſhifts we have procured; for beſides the hypocriſie of it (in ſeeming to ſacrifice to him, when we ſacrifice indeed to our owne wits and carnall helps) we make him a Patron of thoſe wayes which he moſt abhors; and it is *Idolatry* in the higheſt degree, to transforme God ſo in our thoughts, as to think he is pleaſed with that which comes from his greateſt

We ought not to *praiſe* God in doing evil.

Chap. 26.

enemy, And there is a groſſe miſtake to take Gods curſe for a bleſſing; to thrive in an ill way, is a ſpirituall judgement, extremely hardening the heart.

It is an argument of *Davids* ſincerity here, that he meant not to take any indirect courſe for delivering himſelfe, becauſe he intended to *praiſe God*, which as no guilty conſcience can offer (being afraid to looke God in the face) ſo God would abhorre ſuch a ſacrifice, were it offered to him. S. *Paul* was ſtirred up to *praiſe God*, but withall he was aſſured *God would preſerve him from every evill work*.

2 Tim. 4. 18

Sometimes indeed where there is no malicious intention, God pardons ſome breakings out of fleſh and bloud, endeavouring to help our ſelves in danger, ſo farre as not to take advantage of them to deſert us in trouble, as in *David* who eſcaped from *Achiſh* by *counterfeiting*; and this yeelds a double ground of thankfulneſſe, partly for Gods over-looking our miſcarriage, and partly for the deliverance it ſelf. Yet this indulgence of God, will make the ſoul more aſhamed afterward, for theſe ſinfull ſhifts, therefore it

1 Sam. 27. 10.

it muſt be no preſident to us. There can neither be grace nor wiſedome in ſetting upon a courſe, wherein we can neither pray to God for ſucceſs in, nor bleſs God when he gives it. In this caſe God moſt bleſſeth, where he moſt croſſeth, and moſt curſeth where the deluded heart thinks he bleſſeth moſt. Chap. 27.

CHAP. XXVII.

In our worſt condition we have cauſe to praiſe God. Still ample cauſe in theſe dayes.

[*Shall yet praiſe him*] Or, yet *I will praiſe God*; that is, however it goeth with me, yet as I have cauſe, ſo I have a ſpirit to praiſe God; when we are at the loweſt, yet it is a mercy that we are not conſumed; we are never ſo ill, but it might be worſe with us; whatſoever is leſſe than hell, is undeſerved. It is a matter of praiſe, that yet we have time and opportunity to get into a bleſſed condition. *The Lord hath afflicted me ſore, but he hath not delivered mee to death*, ſaith *David*. Pſa. 118. 18.

Chap. 27. In the worſt times there is a preſence of God with his children.

1. 1. In moderating the meaſure of the croſſe, that it be not above their ſtrength.

2. Pſa. 125. 3. 2. In moderating the time of it, *The rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt long upon the lot of the righteous.* God limits both meaſure and time.

3. 3. He is preſent in mixing ſome comfort, and ſo allaying the bitterneſſe of a croſſe.

4. 4. Yea, and he ſupports the ſoul by inward ſtrength; ſo as though it faint, yet it ſhall not utterly fail.

5. 5. God is preſent in ſanctifying a croſs for good, and at length when he hath perfected his own work in his, he is preſent for a finall deliverance of them. A ſound hearted Chriſtian hath alwayes a God to go to, a promiſe to go to, former experience to go to, beſides ſome preſent experiences of Gods goodneſſe which he enjoys; for the preſent he is a childe of God, a member of Chriſt, an heir of heaven; he dwels in the love of God in the croſſe, as well as out of it, he may be caſt out of his happy condition in the world, but never out of Gods favour.

If

If Gods Children have cauſe to praiſe God in their worſt condition, what difference is there betwixt their beſt eſtate and their worſt? Chap. 27. Queſt.

Howſoever Gods Children have continual occaſion to praiſe God, yet there be ſome more eſpecial ſeaſons of praiſing God than others, there be dayes of *Gods own making*, of purpoſe to rejoyce in wherein we may ſay, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce therein.* And this I think is chiefly intended here. *David* comforts himſelf with this, that however it was now with him, yet God would deal ſo graciouſly with him hereafter, that he ſhould have cauſe to bleſſe his name. Anſw. Pſa. 118.24.

Though in evil times we have cauſe to praiſe God, yet ſo we are, and ſuch are our ſpirits (for the moſt part) that affliction ſtraitens our hearts. Therefore the Apoſtle thought it the fitteſt duty in affliction to pray, *Is any afflicted? let him pray*, ſaith *James*; *Is any joyfull? let him ſing Pſalmes*: ſhewing that the day of rejoycing is the fitteſt day of praiſing God. Every work of a Chriſtian is beautifull in its own time, the graces of Chriſtianity Jam. 5.13.

Chap. 27.

have their ſeverall offices at ſeverall ſeaſons; in trouble, *prayer* is in its ſeaſon, In the evil day *call upon me*, ſaith God: In better times *praiſes* ſhould appear and ſhew themſelves. When God manifeſts his goodneſſe to *his*, he gives them grace with it, to manifeſt their thankfulneſs to him. Praiſing of God is then moſt comely (though never out of ſeaſon) when God ſeems to call for it, by renewing the ſenſe of his mercies in ſome freſh favour towards us. If a bird will ſing in Winter, much more in the Spring. If the heart be prepared in the Winter time of adverſity to praiſe God, how ready will it be when it is warmed with the glorious Sunſhine of his favour?

Our life is nothing but as it were a webbe woven with interminglings of wants and favours, croſſes and bleſſings, ſtandings and fallings, combat and victory, therefore there ſhould be a perpetual intercourſe of praying and praiſing in our hearts. There is alwayes a ground of communion with God in one of theſe kindes, till we come to that condition wherein all wants ſhall be ſupplyed, where indeed is onely matter of praiſe.

Yet

Yet praiſing God in this life hath this prerogative, that here we praiſe him *in the middeſt of his enemies*. In heaven all will be in conſort with us. God eſteemes it an honour in the middeſt of devils, and wicked men (whoſe life is nothing but a diſhonour of him) to have thoſe that will make his *name* (as it is in it ſelf ſo) *great* in the world. Chap. 27.

David comforts himſelf in this, that he ſhould praiſe God; which ſhewes he had inured himſelf well before to this holy exerciſe, in which he found ſuch comfort, that he could not but *joy* in the fore-thoughts of that time, wherein he ſhould have freſh occaſion of his former acquaintance with God. Thoughts of this nature enter not into a heart that is ſtrange to God. Thoughts of praiſe ſhould be precious to us.

It is a ſpeciall Art in time of miſery, to think of matter of joy, if not for the preſent, yet for the time to come; for joy diſpoſeth to *praiſe*, and praiſe again ſtirres up *joy*; theſe mutually breed one another, even as the ſeed brings forth the tree, and the tree brings forth the ſeed. It is wiſedome therefore to ſet faith on work, to take as much comfort as we can from

Chap. 29.

future promiſes, that we may have comfort and ſtrength for the preſent, before we have the full poſſeſſion of them. It is the nature of faith to antedate bleſſings, by making *them* that are to be performed *hereafter*, as preſent *now*, becauſe we have them in the *promiſe*. If God had not allowed us to take many things in truſt for the time *to come*, both for his glory, and our good, he would never have left ſuch rich promiſes to us. For faith doth not only give glory to God for the preſent (in a preſent beleeving of his truth, and relying upon him) but as it lookes forward, it ſees an everlaſting ground of praiſing God, and is ſtirred up to praiſe him *now*, for that *future* matter of *praiſe*, which it is ſure to have hereafter. The very hopes of future good, made *David* praiſe God for the preſent. If the happy condition we look for were preſent, we would embrace it with preſent praiſes. Now *faith is the evidence of things not ſeen*, and gives a being to that which is not; whereupon a true beleeving ſoule cannot but be a praiſing ſoule. For this end God reveals before-hand what wee ſhall have, that before-hand we ſhould

Heb. 11. 1.

praiſe

praiſe him, as if we poſſeſſed it. For that is a great honour to his truth, when we eſteem of what he ſpeakes, as done, and what he promiſeth, as already performed. Had we not a perpetual confidence in the perpetuity of his love to us, how is it poſſible we ſhould praiſe him? Chap. 29.

But we want thoſe grounds for the time to come which David *had, he had particular promiſes which we want.* Queſt.

Though we want *Urim* and *thummim*, and the Prophets to foretell us what the times to come ſhall be, yet we have the Canon of Scripture enlarged, we live under a more glorious manifeſtation of Chriſt, and under a more plentifull ſhedding of the Spirit, whereby that want is abundantly ſupplyed; we have general promiſes for the time to come, that *God will never faile nor forſake us; that he will be with us in fire and in water,* Deut. 31. 6. *that he will give an iſſue to the temptation,* Heb. 12. 11. *and that the iſſue of all things ſhall be for our good, that we ſhall reap the quiet fruit of righteouſneſſe, and no good thing will he withhold from them that lead a godly life,* Pſa. 84. 11. *&c.* If we had a ſpirit of faith to apply theſe generals, we ſhould ſee much of Gods Anſw. 1.

Chap. 27. Gods goodneſſe in particular.

2. Beſides general promiſes we have ſome particular ones for the time to come; of the confuſion of Antichriſt, of the converſion of the *Jewes*, and fulneſſe of the *Gentiles*, &c. which though we perhaps ſhall never live to ſee, yet we are members of that body, which hereafter ſhall ſee the ſame, which ſhould ſtirre up our hearts to praiſe God, as if we did enjoy the preſent fullfilling of them our ſelves, for faith can preſent them to the ſoul, as if they were now preſent.

3. Some that have a more neare communion with God, may have a particular faith of ſome particular deliverances, whereupon they may ground particular prayer. "*Luther* praying for a ſick friend, "who was very comfortable, and uſefull "to him, had a particular anſwer for "his recovery, whereupon he was ſo con- "fident, that he ſent word to his friend, "that hee ſhould certainely recover. "*Latimer* prayed with great zeale for 1. "three things. 1. That Queen *Elizabeth* 2. "might come to the Crown. 2. That he "might ſeale the truth with his heart 3. "bloud. 3. And that the Goſpel might "be

"be reſtored *once again, once again*, which "he expreſſed with great vehemency of "ſpirit, All which three GOD heard "him in. But the priviledges of a few muſt not be made a generall rule for all. Priviledges goe not out of the perſons, but reſt there. Yet if men would maintaine a nearer communion with God, there is no doubt but he would reveale himſelf in more familiar manner to them, in many particulars than uſually he doth. Thoſe particular Promiſes in the 91. Pſalme, and other places, are made good to ſuch as have a particular faith, and to all others (with thoſe limitations annexed to promiſes of that nature) ſo far forth as God ſeeth it will induce to their good and his owne glory, and ſo farre forth as they depend upon him in the uſe of meanes; And is not this ſufficient to ſtay a gracious heart?

Chap. 27.

But not to inſiſt upon particular promiſes and revelations (the performance whereof we enjoy *here* in this preſent life) we have rich and precious promiſes of finall and full deliverance from all evill, and perfect enjoying of all good in that life which is to come; yet not *ſo to come*, but

Chap. 27.

but that we have the earneſt and firſt fruits of it here; All is not kept for heaven; Wee may ſay with *David*, *Oh how great is thy goodneſſe, which thou haſt laid up for them that feare thee*, and (not onely ſo, but) how great is that goodneſſe which thou haſt wrought in them that *truſt* in thee, even *before the ſons of men*! God treaſures not up all his goodneſſe for the time to come, but layes much of it out daily *before* ſuch as have eyes to behold it.

Pſa. 31. 19.

Now Gods maine end in revealing ſuch glorious promiſes of the life to come is, that they might be a ground of comfort to us, and of praiſe to him even in this life; And indeed what can be grievous in this world to him that hath heaven in his eye? What made our bleſſed Saviour *endure the croſſe*, and *deſpiſe ſhame*, but the joy *of glory to come ſet before him*?

Heb. 12. 2.

The *duty* that *David* brought his heart to before he had a full enjoyment of what he looked for, was patient *waiting*, it being Gods uſe to put a long date oftentimes to the performances of his *promiſes*; *David* after he had the *promiſe of a King-*

dome

Waiting upon God a neceſſary duty.

dome, was put off a long time ere he was inveſted to it; *Abraham* was an old man before he enjoyed his ſon of the *Promiſe*; *Joſeph* ſtayed a long time before he was exalted; Our bleſſed Saviour himſelfe was thirty foure years old before he was exalted up into glory.

God deferres, but his deferring is no empty ſpace, wherein no good is done, but there is in that ſpace a fitting for promiſes. Whileſt the ſeed lyeth hid in the earth, time is not loſt, for Winter fits for Spring, yea, the harder the Winter, the more hopefull the Spring; yet were it a meere empty ſpace, we ſhould hold out, becauſe of the great things to come; but being onely a preparing time, we ſhould paſſe it with the leſſe diſcouragement. Let this ſupport us in all the thwartings of our deſire; it is a folly to think, that we ſhould have Phyſick and health both at once; we muſt indure the working of Gods Phyſick; when the ſick humour is carried away and purged, then we ſhall enjoy deſired health. God promiſeth forgiveneſſe of ſinne, but thou findeſt the burthen of it daily on thee. Cheere up thy ſelfe, when the morning

Chap. 27.

is darkeſt, then comes day; after a wearie week comes a Sabbath, and after a fight victory will appeare. Gods time is beſt, therefore reſolve upon waiting his leiſure. For the better demeaning of our ſelves herein, we muſt know we muſt ſo *wait*, that we provoke not in the meane time his patience on whom wee depend, by putting forth our hand to any evill, which indeed is a croſſing of our hopes. Therefore waiting upon God is alwayes joyned with *doing good*. There is an influence in the thing hoped for, in the ſpirit of him that truly hopes, ſtirring him up to a ſutable conformity, by purging himſelf of whatſoever will not ſtand with the holineſſe of that condition. *Waiting* implyes all graces, as *Patience*, *Perſeverance*, *Long-ſuffering* in holding out, notwithſtanding the tedioufneſs of time deferred; *Courage*, and breaking through all difficulties that ſtand between. For what is *waiting* indeed, but a continuing in a gracious inoffenfive courſe, til the accompliſhment of our deſires?

Whence we may diſcern a maine difference betwixt a Chriſtian and a carnall man, who is ſhort-ſpirited, and all for the

the preſent; he will have his good here, whereas a Saint of God continues ſtill waiting, though all things ſeem contrary to what he expects. The preſence of things to come is ſuch to *faith*, as it makes it *deſpiſe the pleaſure of ſinne for a ſeaſon*. What evidence of goodneſſe is it for a man to be good onely upon the apprehenſion of ſomething that contents him? Here is the glory of faith, that it can upon Gods bare promiſe, croſſe it ſelfe in things pleaſing to nature, and raiſe up the ſoule to a diſpoſition ſome wayes anſwerable to that bleſſed eſtate which (though yet it enjoyes not, yet) it is undoubtedly perſwaded of, and looks for. What can encourage us more to *waite*, than this, that the good we waite for, is greater than we are able to conceive, yea, greater than we can deſire or hope for?

This was no preſumptuous reſolution of *Davids* owne ſtrength, but it iſſued from his preſent truth of heart (ſo farre as he knew the ſame;) together with an humble dependance upon God, both for deliverance, and a heart to praiſe him for it; becauſe Gods benefits are uſually entire, and

Chap. 28.

and are ſweetned with ſuch a ſenſe of his love, as cauſeth a *thankefull heart*, which (to a true Chriſtian) is a greater bleſſing than the deliverance it ſelf, as making the ſoul better. *David* doth acknowledge with humble admiration, that a heart enlarged comes from God, *Who am I* (ſaith he) *and who are my people?*

He mentioneth here *praiſing God*, in ſtead of *deliverance*, becauſe a heart enlarged to praiſe God is indeed the greateſt part of the *deliverance*; for by it the ſoul is delivered out of its own ſtraits and diſcontent.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Divers qualities of the praiſe due to God. With helps therein. And notes of Gods hearing our prayers.

No eaſie matter to praiſe God aright.

THough this be Gods *due* and our *duty*, and it ſelfe a delightfull thing, yet it is not ſo eaſie a matter to *praiſe God*, as many imagine: Muſick is ſweet, but the ſetting of the ſtrings in tune is unpleaſing; our ſouls will not be long in tune, and it is harſh to us to goe about the

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setting them in order; like curious Clocks, a little thing will hinder the motion; especially *passion*, which disturbs not only the frame of *grace* in us, but the very frame of *nature*, putting man out of the power and possession of himselfe; and therfore *David* here when he had *thoughts* of praising God, was fain to take up the quarrell betwixt him and his soul first; *Praising* sets all the parts and graces of the soul awork; and therefore the soul had need gather it self and its strength together to this duty. Chap. 28.

It requires especially *self-deniall*, from a conscience of our owne wants, weaknesses, and unworthinesse; it requires a giving up of our selves, and all ours to be at Gods dispose; the very ground and the *fruit* which it yeelds are both Gods; and they never gave themselves truly up to God, that are not ready to give all they have to him whensoever he cals for it; *thankefulnesse* is a sacrifice, and in sacrifices there must be killing before offering, otherwise the sacrifice will be as the offering up some unclean creature; *thanksgiving* is an *Incense*, and there must be *fire* to burn that Incense; *thanksgiving* requires Self-deniall requisite in praising God.

Chap. 28.

not onely *affections*, but the *heat* of affections; there must be some assurance of the benefit we praise God for; and it is no easie matter to maintain assurance of our interest in the best things.

What a Christian should do in want of assurance.

Yet in this case if we feel not sense of assurance, it is good we should praise God for what we have; we cannot deny but God offers himself in mercy to us, and that he intends our good thereby, for so we ought to construe his merciful dealing towards us, and not have him in jealousie without ground; if we bring our hearts to be willing to praise God, for that we cannot but acknowledge comes from him, he will be ready in his time to shew himself more clearly to us; we taste of his goodnesse many wates, and it is accompanied with much patience, and these in their natures leade us not only to *repentance*, but likewise to *thankful* acknowledgement; and we ought to follow that which God leads us unto, though he hath not yet acquainted us with his secrets.

It is good in this case to help the soul with a firm *resolution*, and to back resolution with a *vow* not only in generall that we will *praise*, but particularly of some-

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thing within our own power (provided it prove no ſnare to us.) For by this means the heart is perfectly gained, and the thing is as good as done in regard of Gods acceptance and our comfort; becauſe ſtrong reſolutions diſcover *ſincerity* without any hypocriticall reſervation and hollowneſs. Alwayes ſo much ſincerity as a man hath, ſo much will his inward peace be. *Reſolution* as a ſtrong ſtream bears down all before it; little good is done in Religion without *this*, and with it all is as good as done.

So ſoon as we ſet upon this work, we ſhall feele our ſpirits to riſe higher and higher as the waters in the Sanctuary, as the ſoul grows more and more heated; ſee how *David* riſeth by degrees, *Be glad in the Lord*, and then, *rejoyce ye righteous*, and then, *ſhout for joy all ye that are upright in heart*, the Spirit of God will delight to carry us along in this duty, until it leaves our Spirits in *heaven*, praiſing God with the *Saints* and glorious *Angels* there; *To him that hath* and uſeth *it ſhall be given*; he that knoweth God aright, will honour him by truſting of him; he that honours him by truſting him, will

Chap. 28.

honour him by *praying*; and he that honours him by prayer, shall honour him by *praises*; he that honours him by praises *here*, shall perfect his praises in *heaven*; and this will quit the labour of setting and keeping the soul in tune; this trading with God is the richest trade in the world; when we return *praises* to him, he returns new favours to us, and so an everlasting ever-encreasing intercourse betwixt God and the soul is maintained; *David* here resolved to *praise God*, because he had assurance of such a deliverance as would yeeld him a ground of praising him.

Praise a sweet Incense.

Praising of God may well be called *Incense*, because as it is sweet in *it self*, and sweet to God, so it sweetens all that comes from us. *Love* and *Joy* are sweet in themselves, though those whom we love and joy in, should not know of our affection, nor return the like; but we cannot love and joy in God, but he will delight in us; when we neglect the praising of God, we lose both the comfort of Gods love, and our own too; It is a spiritual judgement to want or lose the sight or sense of Gods favours, for it is a signe of want of spirituall life, or at least livelinesse; it shews we

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are not yet in the ſtate of thoſe whom God hath choſen, to ſet forth the riches of his glory upon.

When we conſider that if we anſwer not kindeneſſe and favour ſhewed unto us by men, we are eſteemed unworthy of reſpect (as having ſinned againſt the bond of humane ſociety and love) we cannot but much more take ſhame to our ſelves, when we conſider the diſproportion of our carriage, and unkinde behaviour towards God; when in ſtead of being *temples* of his praiſe, we become *graves* of his benefits; What a vanity is this in our nature, to ſtand upon exactneſſe of juſtice, in anſwering petty curteſies of men, and yet to paſs by the ſubſtantiall favours of God, without ſcarce taking notice of them? the beſt breeding is to acknowledge greateſt reſpects where they are moſt due, and to think, that if unkindeneſſe and rudeneſſe be a ſin in *civilty*, it is much more in *Religion*; the greateſt danger of unthankfulneſſe, is in the greateſt matter of all; if we arrogate any ſpirituall ſtrength to our ſelves in ſpirituall actions, we commit either *ſacrilege* in robbing God of his *due*, or *mockery*, by

Chap. 28.

praising him for that which we hold to be of our selves; if injustice be to be condemned in man, much more in denying God his due, *Religion* being the first due. It takes much from thankfulnesse, when we have common conceits of peculiar favours, *Praise* is not comely in the mouth of *fools*. God loves no *blinde sacrifice*.

We should therefore have wisedome and judgement, not onely to know upon what *grounds* to be thankfull, but in what *order*, by discerning what be the best and first favours whence the rest proceed, and which adde a worthinesse to all the rest; it is good to see blessings, as they issue from grace and mercy. It much commends any blessing, to see the love and favour of God in it, which is more to be valued than the blessing it self, as it much commends any thing that comes from us, when we put a respect of thankfulnesse, and love to God upon it; and if we observe, we shall finde the unkindenesse of others to us, is but a correction of our unkindenesse to God.

In *praising God*, it is not good to *delay*, but take advantage of the freshnesse of the blessing; what we adde to delay, we take

take from *thankfulneſſe*; and withall, loſe the prime and firſt-fruits of our affections: It is a wiſe redeeming of time, to obſerve the beſt *ſeaſons* of *thankefulneſſe*; a cheerfull heart will beſt cloſe with a cheerful duty; and therefore it is not good to waſte ſo fit a temper in frivolous things, but after ſome contentment given to nature, let God have the fruit of his own planting, otherwiſe it is even as better than the refreſhing of him that ſtandeth by a good fire, and crieth *ah, ah, I am warm.* Chap. 28.

David doth not ſay, *I will thank God*, but *I ſhall praiſe him*; (though he intends *that*) Thanks is then beſt when it tends to *praiſing*, and there ends; for thanks alone ſhews reſpect to our *own* good only, praiſes to *Gods glory*; and in particular to the glory of ſuch *excellencies* whence the benefit comes; and from thence the ſoul is enlarged to think highly of all Gods *excellencies*.

Hanna upon particular thanks for hearing her about a *childe*, takes occaſion to ſet out Gods other *excellencies*, and riſeth higher and higher, from *one* to *many*, from the preſent time to that which was to

Chap. 28.

come, from particular favours to her self, ſhe ſtirres up others to praiſe God for his mercy to them; So *David*, *Deliver me, O God, and my tongue ſhall ſing of thy praiſes*; He propounds this as an engagement to the Lord to help him, becauſe it ſhould tend to the enlargement of his glory; he was reſolved to improve Gods favour this way.

The Spirit of God works like *new wine*, enlarging the ſpirit from one degree of praiſing God to another; and becauſe it foreſees the eternity of Gods love (as far as it can), it endeavours an eternity of Gods praiſe; a gracious heart upon taſte of favour ſhewed to it ſelf, is preſently warmed to ſpread the praiſe of God to others, and the more it ſees the fruit of truſting *God*, and his *truth* in performing promiſe, the more it ſtill honours that *truſting*, as knowing that it lies upon Gods honour, to *honour* thoſe that *honour him*; bleſſing will procure bleſſing; the ſoul hath never ſuch freedom from ſin, as when it is in a thankfull frame; for *thankefullneſſe* iſſues from a heart truly humbled, and emptied of it ſelf, truly loving and rejoycing in God; and upon any

any ſin the ſpirit is grieved and ſtraitned, and the lips ſealed up in ſuch a heart; for the conſcience upon any ſinne looks upon it not only as diſobedience againſt Gods will and authority, bnt as *unthankfulneſs* to his goodneſſe, and this melteth a godly heart moſt of all: When *Nathan* told *David* God had done this, and this for him, and was ready to do more, he could not hold in the *confeſſion* of his *ſin*, but relented and gave in preſently. Chap. 28.

We ought not only to give *thanks*, but to be *thankeful*, to meditate and ſtudy the praiſes of God. Our whole life ſhould be nothing elſe but a continuall bleſſing of his holy Name, endeavouring to bring in all we have, and to lay it out for God and his people, to ſee where he hath any receivers: our goodneſſe is *nothing to God*, we need bring no water to the *fountain*, nor light to the *Sun*. Thankfulneſſe is full of *invention*, it deviſeth liberal things, though it be our duty to be good Stewards of out talents, yet *thankefulneſs* adds a luſtre, and a more gracious *acceptance*, as having more of that which God cals for. We ſhould ſtudy Gods praiſes.

Our praiſing God ſhould not be as ſparks out of a *flint*, but as water out of

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Chap. 28.

a *ſpring*, natural, ready, free, as Gods love to us is; *mercy* pleaſes him, ſo ſhould *praiſes* pleaſe us; It is our happineſs when the beſt part in us is exerciſed about the beſt and higheſt work; It was a good ſpeech of him that ſaid, If God had made me a *Nightingale*, I would have ſung as a *Nightingale*, but now God hath made me a man, I will ſing forth the *praiſes of God*, which is the work of a Saint onely: *All thy works bleſſe thee, and thy Saints praiſe thee:* All things are either bleſſings in their nature, or ſo bleſſed, as they are made bleſſings to us by the over-ruling coming of him, who maketh all things ſerviceable to his, even the worſt things in this ſenſe are made ſpirituall to *Gods* people againſt their own nature; how great is that goodneſſe which makes even the worſt things good?

The leaſt mercy to be prized.

Little favours come from no ſmall love, but even from the ſame love that God intends the greateſt things to us, and are pledges of it; the godly are more thankfull for the leaſt favours then worldly men for the greateſt: the affection of the giver inhaunces the gift.

O then let us labour to improve both what

Chap. 28.

what we have and what we are to his glory: It diſcovers that we *love* God (not onely with all our *underſtanding*, *heart*, and *affections*, but) when with all our *might* and *power*, ſo farre as we have advantage by any *part*, *relation*, or *calling* whatſoever we endeavour to do him ſervice, we cannot have a greater honour in the world, than to be honoured of God, to be abundant in this kinde.

Our praiſe ſhould be reall.

Our time here is ſhort, and we ſhall all ere long be called to a reckoning, therefore let us ſtudy *reall praiſes*. Gods bleſſing of us is in *deed*, and ſo ſhould ours be of him. Thanks in *words* is good, but in *deeds* is better; *leaves* are good, but *fruit* is better; and of fruit, that which *coſts* us moſt. True *praiſe* requires our *whole man*, the *judgement* to eſteem, the *memory* to treaſure up, the *will* to reſolve, the affections to delight, the *tongue* to ſpeak of, and the life to expreſs the rich favours of God: what can we think of? what can we call to minde? What can we reſolve upon? what can we ſpeak? What can we expreſſe in our whole courſe better than the *praiſes* of him, *of whom, and through whom, and to whom* we and *all things are*?

Our

Chap. 28.

Our whole life ſhould ſpeak nothing but thankfulneſſe, every condition and place we are in, ſhould be a witneſſe of our thankfulneſs; this will make the times and places we live in, the better for us; when we our ſelves are monuments of Gods mercy, it is fit we ſhould be patterns of his praiſes, and leave monuments to others; We ſhould think life is given us, to doe ſomething better than life in; we live not to live; our life is not the end of it ſelf, but the praiſe of the giver: God hath joyned his glory and our happineſſe together; it is fit that we ſhould referre all that is good to his glory, that hath joyned his glory to our beſt good, in being glorified in our ſalvation.

David concludes, that he *ſhould certainly praiſe God*, becauſe he had *prayed* unto him. Prayers be the ſeeds of praiſes, I have ſown, therefore I will reap; what we receive as a fruit of our prayers, is more ſweet than what we have by a generall providence.

Queſt. *But how do we know that God hears our prayers?*

Anſw. 1. If we regard them our ſelves, and expect an iſſue; prayer is a ſure adventure,

ture, we may well look for a return.

2. It is a ſigne that God hath heard our prayers, when he ſtirs up thankfulneſs afore-hand upon aſſurance; *thankefulneſſe* cannot be without either the grace of *God*, by which we are thankfull, or ſome taſte of the things we are thankfull for. God often accepts the prayer, when he doth not grant the thing, and will give us thereby occaſion of thankſ-giving for his wiſe care, in changing one bleſſing for onother fitter for us. God regards my prayers, when by prayer my heart is wrought to that frame which he requires, that is, an humble ſubjection to him, from an acknowledgement of my wants, and his fulneſſe. There is nothing ſtirred up in our hearts by the Spirit, no, not ſo much as a gracious deſire, but God will anſwer it, if we have a ſpirit to wait. 2.

3. We may know God hath accepted our prayer, when he makes the way eaſie and plain after prayer by a gracious providence, when the courſe of things begin to change, and we meet with comforts in ſtead of former croſſes, and finde our hearts quieted and encouraged againſt what we moſt feared. 3.

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Chap. 28. 4.

4. Likewiſe earneſtneſſe in prayer is a ſigne God hears our prayers, as fire kindled from heaven ſheweth God accepts the ſacrifice; the ground of prevailing by our prayer, is, that they are put up in a gracious name, and for perſons in favour, and dictated by Gods own Spirit; they work in the ſtrength of the bleſſed Trinity, not their own, giving God the glory of all his excellencies.

It is Gods direction *to call upon him in trouble*, and it is his promiſe to deliver; and then both his *direction* and *promiſe* that we ſhall glorifie him: When troubles ſtirre up *prayer*, Gods anſwer to them will ſtirre up *prayſes*. *David* when he ſaith, *I ſhall praiſe God*, preſuppoſes God would deliver him, that he might have ground of praiſing his Name. And he knew God would deliver him, becauſe as from faith he had praied for deliverance, ſo he knew it was the order of Gods dealing, to revive after drooping, and refreſh after fainting. God knows otherwiſe that our ſpirits would fail before him.

A thankfull diſpoſition, is a ſpeciall help in an afflicted condition, for *thankfulneſſe* ſprings from *love*, and *love rejoyceth* in

in ſuffering. Thankfulneſs raiſes the ſoul higher than it ſelf, it is trading with God, whereby as *we* by him, ſo he *gains* by us. Therefore the Saints uſed this as a motive to God, that he would grant their deſires, becauſe *the living praiſe him*, and not the *dead*. If God expect praiſe from us, ſure he will put us into a condition of praiſe. Chap. 28.

Unthankfulneſs is a ſin deteſtable both to God and men, and the leſſe puniſhment it receives from humane laws, the more it is puniſhed *inwardly* by ſecret ſhame, and *outwardly* by publike hatred, if once it prove notorious. When Gods arreſts come forth for denying him his tribute, he chiefly eyes an unthankfull heart, and hates all ſinne the worſe, as there is more unthankfulneſs in it: the neglect of kindneſſe is taken moſt unkindly. Why ſhould we load God with injuries, that loadeth us with his bleſſings? who would requite good with evil? Such mens mercies will prove at laſt ſo many indictments againſt them.

I beſeech you therefore labour to be men of praiſes. If in any duty we may expect aſſiſtance, we may in this, that altogether concerns Gods glory: the more *uſe.*

we

Chap. 28.

we praiſe God, the more we ſhall praiſe him. When God by grace enlarges the *will*, he intends to give the *deed*. Gods children wherein their wills are conformable to Gods will, are ſure to have them fullfilled. In a fruitful ground, a man will ſow his beſt ſeed. God intends his owne glory in every mercy, and he that *praiſes him, glorifies him*. When our wils therefore carry us to that which God wils above all, we may well expect he will ſatisfie our deſires. The living God is a living fountain never drawn dry, he hath never done ſo much for us, but he can and will do more. If there be no end of our praiſes, there ſhall be no end of his goodneſs: no way of thriving like to this. By this means we are ſure never to be very miſerable; how can he be dejected, that by a ſweet communion with God ſets himſelf in heaven? nay, maketh his heart a kinde of heaven, *A Temple, a holy of Holies*, wherein *Incenſe* is offered unto God? It is the ſweeteſt branch of our Prieſtly office, to offer up theſe daily ſacrifices; It is not only the beginning, but a further entrance of our heaven upon earth, and ſhall be one day our whole employment for ever.

Praiſe

Chap. 28. Praiſe is a juſt and due debt.

Praiſe is a juſt and due tribute for all Gods bleſſings; for what elſe eſpecially do the beſt favours of God call for at our hands? How do all creatures praiſe God, but by our mouths? It is a debt alwayes owing, and alwayes paying; and the more we pay, the more we ſhall owe; upon the due diſcharge of this debt, the ſoul will finde much peace. A thankfull heart to God for his bleſſings, is the greateſt bleſſing of all. Were it not for a few gracious ſouls, what honour ſhould God have of the reſt of the unthankful world? which ſhould ſtir us up the more to be trumpets of Gods praiſes in the midſt of his enemies, becauſe this (in ſome ſort) hath a prerogative above our praiſing *God* in heaven; for there God hath no enemies to diſhonour him.

Praiſing of God, a duty without exception.

This is a *duty* that none can except againſt, becauſe it is eſpecially a work of the heart. All cannot ſhew their thankfulneſſe in *giving*, or *doing* great matters, but all may expreſſe the willingneſſe of their hearts. *All within us* may *praiſe his holy Name*, though we have little or nothing *without us*; and that within us is the thing God chiefly requires. Our heart

Pſal. 103.

Chap. 28.

is the *Altar* on which we offer this *Incenſe*; God looks not to quantity, but to proportion; he accepts a mite where there is no more to be had.

Queſt. *But how ſhall we be enabled to this great duty?*

Anſw. 1. *Enter into a deepe conſideration of Gods favours, paſt, preſent, and to come*; thinke of the *greatneſſe* and *ſutableneſſe* of them to our condition, the ſeaſonableneſſe and neceſſity of them every way unto us. Conſider how miſerable our life were without them, even without common favours; but as for ſpirituall favours, that make both our naturall and civill condition comfortable, our very life were death, our light were darkneſſe without theſe. In all favours think not of them ſo much, as Gods mercy and love in Chriſt; which ſweetens them. Think of the freeneſſe of this love, and the ſmallneſſe of thy owne deſerts. How many bleſſings doth God beſtow upon us, above our deſerts, yea, above our deſires, nay, above our very thoughts? He had thoughts of love to us when we had no thoughts our ſelves. What had we been if God had not been good unto us? How many

many bleſſings hath God beſtowed upon us, that we never prayed for? and yet we are not ſo ready to *praiſe God*, as to pray unto him; this more *deſire* of *what we want* than eſteeming of what we have, ſhewes too much prevailing of *ſelf-love*. But

2. Secondly, comparing alſo our ſelves with others, will add a great luſtre to *Gods* favour, conſidering we are all hewed out of one rock, and differ nothing from the meaneſt, but in Gods free love. Who are we that God ſhould ſingle us out for the glory of his rich mercy?

3. Conſidering likewiſe, *that the bleſſings of God to us are ſuch as if none but we had them, and God cares for us, as if he had none elſe to care for in the world beſides.* Theſe things well pondered, ſhould ſet the greater price upon Gods bleſſings; what are wee in nature and grace but Gods bleſſings; What is in us, about us, above us? What ſee we, taſte we, enjoy we, but bleſſings: All we have or hope to have, are but dead favours to us, unleſſe we put life into them by a ſpirit of thankfulneſſe. And ſhall we be as dead as the earth, as the ſtones we tread on? Shall we live as if we were reſolved *God* ſhould

Chap. 28.

have no praise by us? Shall we make our selves God, ascribing all to our selves? Nay, shall we (as many doe) fight against God with his owne favours, and turne Gods blessings against himself? Shall we abuse peace to security? Plenty to ease, promises to presumption, gifts to pride? How can we please the devil better than thus doing? Oh! the wonderfull patience of God, to continue life to those whose life is nothing else, but a warring against him the giver of life.

As God hath thoughts of love to us, so should our thoughts be of praises to him, and of doing good in our places to others for his sake. Think with thy self, Is there any I may honour God by relieving, comforting, counselling? Is there any of *Jonathans* race? Is there any of Christs deare ones? I will doe good to them, that they together with me, and for me may praise God. As *David* here checks himselfe for the failing and disquietnesse of his spirit, and as a cure thereof, thinks of praising God: So let us (in the like case) stirre up our souls as he did, and say, *Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me set forth his holy Name.*

2 Sam. 9.1.

Psal. 118.1.

Psal 103.1.

Name. We never uſe our ſpirits to better purpoſe, than when by that light we have from God, we ſtirre them up to look back again to him. Chap. 28.

By this it will appear to what good purpoſes we had a being here in the *world*, and were brought into communion with Chriſt by the Goſpel. The carriage of all things to the right end, ſhews whoſe we are, and whither we tend. It abundantly appears by *Gods* revealing of himſelf many wayes to us, as by *Promiſes*, *Sacraments*, *Sabbaths*, &c. that he intended to raiſe up our hearts to this heavenly duty. The whole gracious diſpenſation of God in Chriſt tends to this, that our carriage ſhould be nothing elſe, but an expreſſion of thankfulneſs to him; that by a free cheerfull and gracious diſpoſition, we might ſhew we are the people of Gods free grace, ſet at liberty from the ſpirit of bondage, *to ſerve him without fear*, with a voluntary childelike ſervice, *all the dayes of our lives*. The excellent uſe of Thankſgiving. Luk. 1. 74.

Chap. 29.

CHAP. XXIX.

Of Gods manifold ſalvation for his people, And why open, or expreſſed in the countenance.

I Proceed

[*Hee is the ſalvation of my countenance.*

As *David* ſtrengthens his truſt in God, by reaſon fetcht from the future goodneſſe of God apprehended by faith: ſo he ſtrengthens that reaſon with another reaſon fetcht from God, whom he apprehends here as *the ſalvation of his countenance.* We need reaſon againſt reaſon, and reaſon upon reaſon, to ſteele and ſtrengthen the ſoul againſt the onſet of contrary reaſons.

He is the ſalvation of my countenance: that is, He will ſo ſave as I ſhall ſee, and my enemies ſhall ſee it; and upon ſeeing, my *countenance* ſhall be cheared and lifted up; Gods ſaving kindneſſe ſhall be read in my countenance, ſo that all who look on me, ſhall ſay, God hath ſpoken peace to my ſoul, as well as brought peace to my condition.

He

Chap. 29.

He ſaith not *ſalvation*, but *ſalvations*; becauſe as our life is ſubject to many miſeries, in *ſoul*, *body*, and *ſtate*, publike and private, &c. ſo God hath many *ſalvations*: If we have a thouſand troubles, he hath a thouſand wayes of helpe; as he hath more bleſſings than one, ſo he hath more ſalvations then one. He ſaves our ſouls from ſin, our bodies from danger, and our eſtates from trouble. *He is the Redeemer of his people*; and not only ſo, but with him is *plenteous redemption* of all perſons, of all parts both of body and ſoul, from all ill, both of ſin and miſery, for all times, both now and hereafter. He is an everlaſting ſalvation.

David doth not ſay, God will ſave me; but God is ſalvation it ſelfe, and nothing but ſalvation. Our ſinnes only ſtop the current of his mercy, but it being above all our ſins, will ſoon ſcatter that cloud, remove that ſtop, and then we ſhall ſee and feel nothing but ſalvation from the Lord, *All his wayes are mercy and peace* to a repentant ſoul that caſts it ſelf upon him.

Chriſt himſelfe is nothing elſe but ſalvation clothed in our fleſh. So old *Simeon*

Chap. 29.

conceived of him, when he had him in *his armes* and was willing thereupon to yield up his ſpirit to God, having ſeen Chriſt the ſalvation of God: when we embrace Chriſt in the armes of our Faith, we embrace nothing but ſalvation. He makes up that ſweet name given him by his Father, and brought from heaven by an Angell to the full: a name in the Faith of which, it is impoſſible for any beleeving ſoul to ſink.

Luk. 2. 14.

The devill in trouble preſents God to us as a revenging *deſtroyer*, and unbeliefe preſents him under a falſe vizard; but the skill of *faith* is, to preſent him as a Saviour clothed with ſalvation. We ſhould not ſo much look what deſtruction the devill and his threaten, as what ſalvation God promiſeth. To God belong *the iſſues of death*; and of all other troubles which are leſſer deaths. Cannot he that hath vouchſafed an iſſue in Chriſt from eternal death, vouchſafe an iſſue from all temporal evils? If he will raiſe our bodies, cannot he raiſe our conditions? He that brought us into trouble, can eaſily make a way out of it when he pleaſeth. This ſhould be a ground of reſolute and ab-

Think of God as a Saviour in trouble.

Pſal. 68. 20.

Chap. 29.

abſolute obedience, even in our greateſt extremities, conſidering God will either deliver us (from death, or by death, and) at length out of death.

Whither to fly in our troubles.

So then, when we are in any danger, we ſee whither to goe for ſalvation, even to him that is nothing elſe but *ſalvation*; but then we muſt *truſt* in him (as *David* doth) and conceive of him as *ſalvation*, that we may truſt in him. If we will not truſt in *ſalvation*, what will we truſt in? and if *ſalvation* it ſelf cannot ſave us, what can? out of ſalvation there is nothing but deſtruction, which thoſe that ſeek it any where out of God, are ſure to meet with. How pitifull then is their caſe, who goe to a deſtroyer for ſalvation? that ſeek for help from hell?

Whom to returne Praiſe to in all our deliverances. Luke 1.

Here alſo we ſee to whom to returne praiſe in all our deliverances, even to the God of our ſalvation. The *Virgin Mary* was ſtirred up to magnifie the Lord, but why? *Her ſpirit rejoyced in God her Saviour.* Whoſoever is the inſtrument of any good, yet ſalvation is of the Lord; whatſoever brings it, he ſends it. Hence in their holy feaſts for any deliverance, the cup they drank of, was called *the Cup of ſalvation*:

Chap. 29.

ſalvation: and therefore *David* when he ſummons his thoughts, *what to render unto God*; he reſolves upon this, to take *the Cup of Salvation.* But alwaies remember this, that when we think of God as *ſalvation*, we muſt think of him as he in Chriſt to his. For, ſo every thing in God is ſaving, even his moſt terrible attributes of *juſtice* and *power*: out of Chriſt, the ſweeteſt things in God are terrible. Salvation it ſelf will not ſave out of Chriſt, who is the only way of ſalvation, called the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life.*

David addeth, (*He is the ſalvations of my countenance*) that is, he will firſt ſpeak ſalvation to my ſoul, and ſay, *I am thy ſalvation*; and when the heart is cheered (which is as it were *the Sun of this little world*) the beams of that joy will ſhine in the countenance. *True joy begins at the center, and ſo paſſeth to the circumference the outward man.* The countenance is as the glaſſe of the ſoul, wherein you may ſee the naked face of the ſoul, according as the ſeverall affections thereof ſtand. In the countenance of an underſtanding creature, you may ſee more then a bare countenance. The ſpirit of one man may

ſee

Chap. 29.

ſee the countenance of anothers inner man in his outward countenance: which hath a ſpeech of its owne, and declares what the heart ſaith, and how it is affected.

But how comes God to be the ſalvation of our countenance? Queſt.

I anſwer: God only graciouſly ſhines in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, which we with the eye of faith beholding, receive thoſe beams of his grace, and reflect them back again, God ſhineth upon us firſt, and we ſhine in that *light of his countenance* upon us. *The joy* of ſalvation (eſpecially of ſpirituall and eternall ſalvation) is the only true joy: all other ſalvations end at laſt in deſtruction, and are no further comfortable than they iſſue from Gods ſaving love. Anſw.

God will have the body partake with the ſoul; as in matter of *grief*, ſo in matter of *joy*, the lanthorn ſhines in the light of the Candle within. 1.

Again, *God brings forth the joy of the heart into the countenance, for the further ſpreading and multiplying of joy to others.* 2.

Next unto the light of the ſweet countenance of God, is the beholding of the cheerful

Chap. 29.

cheerful countenance of a Christian friend, rejoycing from true grounds. Whence it is that the joy of one becomes the joy of *many*, and the joyes of many meet in *one*; by which means, as many lights together make the greater light, so many lightsome spirits make the greater light of spirit: and God receiveth the more praise, which makes him so much to delight in the prosperity of his children. Hence it is, that in any deliverance of Gods people, *the righteous doe compasse them about*, to know *what God hath done for their souls*; and keep a spiritual Feast with them in partaking of their joy. And the godly have cause to joy in the deliverance of other Christians, because they suffered in their afflictions, and it may be in their sinnes the cause of them, which made them somewhat ashamed. Whence it is, that *Davids* great desire was, that *those who feared God might not be ashamed because of him*: insinuating that those who fear *Gods* Name, are ashamed of the falls of *Gods* people. Now when *God* delivers them, this reproach is removed, and those that had part in their sorrow, have part in their joy,

Psal. 142. 7.

Psal. 69. 6.

Again,

Chap. 38. 3.

Again, God will have ſalvation ſo open, that it ſhall appear in the countenance of his people, the more to daunt and vex the enemies. *Cainiſh* hypocrites hang down their heads, when God lifts up the countenance of their brethren; when the countenance of Gods children clears up, then their enemies hearts and looks, are cloudy. *Jeruſalems joy is Babylons ſorrow.* It is with the Church and her enemies as it is with a ballance, the ſcales whereof when one is up the other is down. Whileſt Gods people are under a cloud, carnall people inſult over them, as if they were men deſerted of God. Whereupon they hang down their heads, and the rather, becauſe they think that by reaſon of their ſins, Chriſt and his Religion will ſuffer with them. Hence *Davids* care was, that the miſeries of Gods people *ſhould not be told in Gath.* The chief reaſon why the enemies of the Church gnaſh their teeth at the ſight of Gods gracious dealing, is, that they take the riſing of the Church, to be a preſage of their ruine. A leſſon which *Hamans* wife had learned.

2 Sam. 1. 20

Eſth. 6. 13.

This is a comfort to us in theſe times of *Jacobs* trouble and *Zions* ſorrow: The captivity

captivity of the Church shall returne, *as Rivers in the South.* Therefore the *Church* may say, *Rejoyce not over me O my Enemy, though I am fallen I shall rise again.* Though Christs Spouse bee now as black as the Pots, yet she shall be as white as the *Dove.* If there were not great dangers, where were the glory of Gods great deliverance? The Church at length will be as *a Cup of trembling,* and as a *burthensome stone.* The bloud of the Saints cry, their enemies violence cryes, the prayers of the Church cry for deliverance and vengeance upon the enemies of the *Church*: and (as that *importunate Widow*) will at length prevaile. Shall the importunity of one poor woman prevail with an *unrighteous Judge?* and shall not the prayers of many that cry unto the righteous God take effect? If there were Armies of Prayers, as there are Armies of men, we should see the streame of things turned another way. A few *Moseses* in the Mount, would doe more good than many Souldiers in the valley. If we would lift up our hearts and hands to God, he would lift up our countenance. But alas, we either pray not, or crosse our own prayers for want

Chap. 29.
Psa. 226. 1.
Mic. 7. 8.
Zac. 12. 2
Luk. 11. 5.

of

of love to the Truth of God and his people. Chap. 29.

It is we that keepe Antichriſt and his faction alive, to plague the unthankfull world. The ſtrength he hath is not from his own cauſe, but from our want of zeal; we hinder thoſe *Hallelujahs* by private brabbles, coldneſſe and indifferency in Religion. The Church begins at this time a little to lift up her head againe: Now is the time to follow God with prayers, that he would perfect his own work, and plead his own cauſe; that he would be revenged not only of ours, but his enemies: that he would wholly free his Church from that miſerable bondage. Theſe beginnings give our faith ſome hold to be encouraged to goe to God for the fulfilling of his gracious promiſe, that the Church may rejoyce in the *ſalvation of the Lord*. God doth but look for ſome to ſeek unto him: Chriſt doth but ſtay until he is awaked by our *prayers*. But it is to be feared, that God hath not yet perfected his worke in *Zion*. The Church is not fully prepared for a ful and glorious deliverance. If God had once his ends in the humiliation of the Church for

Chap. 29.

for sins past, with resolution of reformation for the time to come, then this age perhaps might *see the salvation of the Lord*, which the generations to come shall be witness of: *We should see Zion in her perfect beauty*. The generations of those that came out of *Egypt* saw and enjoyed the pleasant land which their progenitors were shut out of: who by reason of their murmuring, and looking back to *Ægypt*, and forgetfulnesse of the wonders which God had done for, and before them, perished in the wilderness.

Use.

There is little cause therefore of envying the present flourishing of the enemies of the Church, and of joyning and colluding with them; for it will prove the wisest resolution to resolve to fall and rise with the Church of Christ, considering the enemies themselves shall say, God hath done great things for them: Kings shall lay their Crowns at *Christs feet*, and *bring all their* glory to the *Church*.

Rev. 21. 24.

And for every Christian, this may be a comfort, that though their light for a time may be eclipsed, yet it shall break forth. *David* at this time was accounted an enemy of the State, and had a world of

of falſe imputations laid upon him, which he was very ſenſible of; yet (we ſee here) he knew at length God would be *the ſalvation of his countenance.* Chap. 29.

But ſome (*as* Gideon) *may object, If God intend to be ſo gracious, why is it thus with us?* Object.

The anſwer is, *Salvation* is Gods *owne* work, *humbling* and caſting down is his *ſtrange worke*, whereby he comes to his own work. For, when he intends to ſave, he will ſeem to deſtroy firſt: and when he will juſtifie, he will condemne firſt: whom he will revive, he will kill firſt. Grace and goodneſſe countenanced by God, have a native inbred Majeſty in them, which maketh the face to ſhine, and borroweth not its luſtre from without, which God at length will have to appear in its own likeneſs, howſoever malice may caſt a vaile thereon, and diſguiſe it for a time: And though wickedneſſe (as it is baſe born, and a childe of darkneſſe) may ſhelter it ſelf under authority awhile yet it ſhall hide it ſelf & run into corners. The comfort of comforts is, that at that great day, (the day of all dayes) that day *of the Revelation of the righteous Judge-* Answ.

Chap. 30. Dan. 12.

ment of God: the righteous ſhall then ſhine as the *Sunne* in the *firmament*, then Chriſt will come to be glorious in his Saints, and will be the *ſalvation of the countenance* of all his. Then all the works of darkneſſe ſhall be driven out of countenance, and adjudged to the place from whence they came. In the mean time let us (with *David*) ſupport our ſelves with the hopes of theſe times.

CHAP. XXX.

Of God, our God, and of particular application.

That *Davids* intereſt in God was a ſpeciall foundation o his truſting in God.

[*My God.*] Theſe words imply a ſpecial intereſt that the holy man had in God (as *his God*) being the ground of all which was ſaid before; both of the duty of *truſting*, and of *praiſing*, and of the *ſalvation* that he expected from God. He *is my God*, therefore be not diſquieted; but truſt him. He *is my God*, therefore he will give me matter to praiſe him, and will be *the ſalvation of my countenance*; God hath ſome ſpeciall ones in the world, to whom he

he doth as it were passe over himself, and whose God he is by vertue of a more speciall covenant; whence we have these excellent expressions, *I will be your God, and you shall be my people*: *I will be your Father, and you shall be my sons and daughters.* Since the *fall* we having lost our communion with God the chief good, our happinesse stands in recovering again fellowship with him. For this end we were created, and for this redeemed, and for effecting of this, the Word and Sacraments are sanctified to us, yea, and for this end God himself (out of the bowels of his compassion) vouchsafed to enter into a gracious covenant with us, founded upon Jesus Christ, and his satisfaction to divine justice; so that by Faith we become one with him, and receive him as offered of his Father to *be all in all to us.*

Chap. 30.

Jer. 31.33. 2 Cor. 6.18.

Hence it is, that Christ hath his Name *Emmanuell, God with us*, Not onely because he is God and man too (both natures meeting in one person) but because being God in our nature, he hath undertook this office to bring God and us together. The main end of Christs coming and suffering, was to reconcile, and

Why *Christ* hath his Name *Emmanuel.*

Chap. 30. 1 Pet. 3. 18. to gather together in one; and (as *Peter* expresseth it) *to bring man again to God*. *Immanuel* is the bond of this happy agreement, and appears for ever in heaven to make it good. As the comfort hereof is great, so the foundation of it is sure and everlasting. God will be our God, *so long* as he is Christs God; and because he is Christs God. Thus the Father of the faithfull, and all other holy men before Christ, apprehended God to be their God in the *Messias* to come. Christ was the ground of their interest. He was *yesterday* to them as well as *to day* to us. Hence it is that God is called the *portion* of his people, and they his *jewels*: he is their only *rock* and *strong Tower*, and they his peculiar ones.

Joh. 20. 10.

Heb. 13. Psal. 73. 26. Mal. 3. 25. Psal. 71.

Use. Well may we wonder that the great God should stoop so low, to enter into such a covenant of grace and peace, founded upon such a Mediator, with such utter enemies, base creatures, sinful dust and ashes as we are. This is the wonderment of Angels, a torment of devils, and glory of our nature and persons; and will be matter of admiration, and praising God unto us for all eternity.

As

Chap. 30. That there must be on our part an appropriating of God as he tenders himself to be our God.

As God offereth himselfe to be ours in Christ (else durst we lay no claime to him) so there must be in us an appropriating grace of *faith*, to lay hold of this offer. *David* saith here, *my God*. But by what spirit? by a spirit of *faith*, which looking to Gods offer, maketh it his own whatsoever it layes hold of. God offereth himself in covenant, and Faith catcheth hold thereon presently. With a gracious offer of God, there goeth a gracious touch of his Spirit to the soule, giving it sight and strength, whereby (being aided by the same Spirit) it layeth hold on God shewing himself in love. God saith to the soul, *I am thy salvation*, and the soul saith again, *Thou art my God. Faith is nothing else but a spiritual echo, returning that voice back again, which God first speaks to the soul.* For what acquaintance could the soul claim with so glorious a Majesty, if he should not first condescend so low, as to speak peace, and whisper secretly to the soul, that he is our loving God and Father, and we his peculiar ones in Christ, that our sins are all pardoned, his justice fully satisfied, and our persons freely accepted in his dear Son?

Chap. 30.

But to come more particularly to the words [*My God*] The words are pregnant; in the wombe of them, all that is graciously and comfortaby good is contained; they are the spring-head of all particular blessings. All particular *Relations* and *Titles* that it pleaseth God to take upon him, have their strength from hence, that God is *our God*. More cannot be said, and lesse will not serve the turn. Whatsoever else we have, if we have not God, it will prove but an empty cistern at last, He is our proper element, every thing desires to live in its own element, Fishes in the Sea, Birds in the ayre; in this they are best preserved.

There is a greater strength in this [*My God*] then in any other Title, it is more than if he had said, *My King*, or *My Lord*; these are words of soveraignty and wisedom; but this implies not only infinite power, soveraignty, and wisdom, but likewise infinite *bounty* and *provident care*; so that when we are said to be Gods people, the meaning is, that we are not only such over whom God hath a power and command, but such as toward whom he shews a *loving* and *peculiar respect*.

In

In the words is implyed, 1. A propriety and intereſt in God. 2. An improvement of the ſame for the quieting of the ſoule. Chap. 30. 1. 2.

David (here) layes a *particular* claim, by a particular *faith* unto God. The reaſon is, 1. The vertue of faith is as to lay hold, ſo to appropriate to it ſelfe, and make *its own* whatever it layes hold on, and it doth no more in this, then God gives it leave by his gracious promiſes to doe. Particular faith neceſſary, and why. 1.

2. As God offers ſo *faith* receives, but God offers himſelf in particular to the beleeving ſoul by his Spirit, therefore our faith muſt be particular. That which the Sacraments ſeal, is a *peculiar* intereſt in Chriſt. This is that which hath alwaies upheld the Saints of God, and that which is ever joyned with the life of Chriſt in us. *The life that I live* (ſaith *Paul*) *is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* The ſpirit of faith is a ſpirit of application. 2. Gal. 2. 20.

This is implied in all the *Articles* of our faith; we beleeve God to be *our* Father, and Chriſt to be *born for us*, that he *dyed* for us, and *roſe again* for our good,

Chap. 30.

and now ſits at the right hand of God making requeſts *for us* in particular.

3. 3. This is that which diſtinguiſheth the faith of a true Chriſtian from all hypocrites and caſt-awayes whatſoever. Were it not for this word of poſſeſſion [*Mine*] the devil might ſay the Creed to as good purpoſe as we; he beleeves there is a God, and a Chriſt; but that which torments him is this, he can ſay [*My*] to never an Article of Faith.

4. 4. A general apprehenſion of Gods goodneſſe and mercy may ſtand with deſperation. Take away *My* from *God*, and take away God himſelf in regard of comfort; what comfort was it for *Adam*, when he was ſhut out of Paradiſe, to look upon it after he had loſt it? The more excellencies are in God, the more our grief if we have not our part in them: the very life-blood of the Goſpel, lyes in a ſpecial application of particular mercy to our ſelves. All relations that God and Chriſt have taken upon them, imply a neceſſity of application; What if God be a *rock* of ſalvation, if we do not reſt upon him? What if he be a *foundation*, and we doe not build on him? What if he offers

Tolle meum tolle Deum.

offers himself as a husband, if we will not accept of him, what avails it vs? How can we rejoyce in the salvatiou of our souls, unless we can in particular say, *I rejoyce in God my Saviour?* Chap. 30.

5. Without particular application, we can neither entertain the love of *God*, nor return love again, by which means we lose all the comfort God intends us in his word, which of purpose was written for our solace and refreshment; Take away *particular faith*, and we let out all the spirits of cheerfull and thankfull obedience. 5.

This possessive particle [*My*] hath place in all the golden chain of our salvation. The first spring of all Gods claim to us as his is in his *election* of us; we were by grace *his* before we were; those that are his from that *eternal love*, he *gives to Christ*; this is hid in the breast of God, till he *calls us* out of the rest of the world into communion with Christ. In answering of which call (by *faith*) we become one with Christ, and so one with him. Afterwards in *justification* we feel God experimentally to be reconciled unto us, whence arises *joy* and inward *peace*. And then

Chap. 30.

then upon further *ſanctification* God delights in us as his, bearing his own image, and we from a likeneſſe to God delight in him as ours in his Chriſt, and ſo this mutuall intereſt betwixt God and us continues until at laſt God becomes *all in all* unto us.

Queſt. *But how can a man that is not yet in the State of grace ſay with any comfort* [My God ?]

Anſw. Whileſt a man *regards iniquity in his heart* without any remorſe or diſlike of the ſame, if he ſaith *My God*, his *heart* will give his *tongue* the lye, however in an outward profeſſion and opinion of others, he may bear himſelf as if God were his, upon falſe grounds. For there can be no more in a Concluſion, then it hath from the Principle and Premiſes out of which it is drawn. The *principle* (here) is, that God is the God of all that *truſt in him*. Now if we can make it good, that we truly truſt in God, we may ſafely conclude of comfort from him; for the more certain clearing of which, try your ſelves by the ſigns of truſt delivered.

It is no eaſie matter to ſay in truth of heart [*My God*] the fleſh will ſtill labour for

for ſupremacy, God ſhould be *all in all* unto us, but this will not be till theſe bodies of fleſh (together with the body of ſin) be laid aſide. He that ſayes, God is [*My God*] and doth not yeeld up himſelf unto God, raiſeth a building without a foundation, layeth a *claim* without a *title*, and claimeth a *title* without an *evidence*, reckoning upon a bargain, without conſent of the party with whom he would contract. Chap. 30.

But if a man ſhall out of the ſight and ſenſe of ſin, thirſt after mercy in Chriſt, and call upon God for pardon, *then* God *who* (is a *God hearing prayer*, and) delighteth to be known by the name of *merciful*, will be ready to cloſe and meet with the deſire of ſuch a ſoul, ſo farre as to give it leave to rely upon him for mercy (and that without preſumption) until he further diſcovers himſelfe graciouſly unto it; upon ſenſe of which grace the Soul may be encouraged to lay a further claim unto God, having further acquaintance with him. Hence are thoſe exhortations ſo oft in the *Prophets*, to *turn unto the Lord our God*, becauſe upon our *firſt* reſolution to turn unto *God*, we ſhall find him always ready Pſa. 65. 2. Zac. 1. 3.

Chap. 30.

ready to anſwer thoſe deſires, that he ſtirres up by his own Spirit in us.

We are not therefore to ſtay our turning unto God, till we feel him ſaying to our hearts, *I am thy God*, but when he prevents us by his grace, inabling us to deſire grace, let us follow the work begun in the ſtrength of what grace we have, and then God will further manifeſt himſelf in mercy to us.

Yet God before we can make any thing towards him, letteth into our hearts ſome few beams of mercy thereby drawing us unto him, and reaching us out a hint to lay hold upon.

And as ſin cauſeth a diſtance betwixt God and us, ſo the guilt of ſin in the conſcience, cauſeth further ſtrangeneſſe, inſomuch that we dare not look up to heaven, till God open a little creviſe to let in a little light of comfort (at leaſt) into our ſouls, whereby we are by little and little drawn neerer to him. But this light at the firſt is ſo little, that in regard of the greater ſenſe of *ſin*, and a larger deſire of *grace*, the ſoul reckons the ſame as no *light* at al, in comparilon of what it deſires & ſeeks after. Yet the comfort is, that this dawning

ning light will at length cleer up to a perfect day. Chap. 30.

Thus we see how this claim of God to be *our God*, is still in *growth* until full assurance, and that there is a great distance betwixt the first *act* of faith in cleaving to God, offering himself in Christ to be *ours*, and between the *last fruit* of faith the cleer and comfortable feeling, that God is *our God* indeed. We first by *faith* apply our selves to God, and then apply God to us, to be *ours*; The first is the conflicting *exercise* of faith, the last is the *triumph* of faith; therefore *faith* properly is not assurance. And to comfort us the more, the *promises* are specially made to the *act* of faith, fuller assurance is the *reward* of faith.

If God hath not chosen me in Christ to be his, what ground have I to trust in him? I may cast away my self upon a vain confidence. Object.

We have no ground (at first) to trouble our selves about Gods *Election*. Secret things belong to God; Gods revealed will is, *That all that beleeve in Christ shall not perish.* It is my duty therefore knowing *this*, to beleeve, by doing whereof, I put that question [*whether God be mine or no?*] Answ. Joh. 3. 15.

Chap. 30.

us?] out of all question: for all that *believe* in Christ, are *Christs*, and all that are Christs *are Gods*. It is not my duty to look to Gods secret counsell, but to his open *offer*, *invitation* and *command*, and thereupon to adventure my soul. And this adventure of *Faith* will bring at length a rich return unto us. In warre men will adventure their lives, because they think some will escape, and why not they? In traffick beyond the *Seas* many adventure great estates, because some grow rich by a good return, though many miscarry. The Husbandman adventures his seed, though sometime the year proves so bad, that he never sees it more: And shall not we make a spiritual adventure in casting our selves upon God, when we have so good a warrant as his *command*, and so good an encouragement as his *promise*, that he will not fail those that rely on him? God bids us *draw near to him*, and he will *draw near to us*. Whilest we in Gods own waies draw near to him, and labour to entertain good thoughts of him, he will delight to shew himself favourable unto us. Whilest we are striving against an unbelieving heart, he will come in

in and help us, and ſo freſh light will come in.

Pretend not thy unworthineſſe and inability, to keep thee off from God, for this is the way to keep thee ſo ſtill; if any thing help us, it muſt be God; and if ever he help us it muſt be by caſting our ſelves upon him: for then he will reach out himſelf unto us in the promiſe of mercy to pardon our ſinne, and in the promiſe of grace to ſanctifie our natures. It was a good reſolution of the *Lepers*, *If we enter into the City, the famine is there, and we ſhall dye* (ſay they;) *if we ſit ſtill, we ſhall dye alſo: Let us therefore fall into the hoaſt of Aſſyrians, if they ſave us, we ſhall live; if they kill us, we ſhall but dye*; So we ſhould reaſon, if we ſit ſtill under the load of our ſin, we ſhall dye; if we put our ſelves into the hands of Chriſt, if he ſave us we ſhall live, if he ſave us not, we ſhall but dye. Nay, ſurely he will not ſuffer us to dye. Did ever Chriſt thruſt any back from him, that put themſelves upon him? unleſs it were by that means to draw them the nearer unto him, as we ſee in the *Woman of Canaan*. His deniall was but to increaſe her importunity.

We

Chap. 30.

We ſhould therefore do as ſhe did, gather all arguments to help our faith. Suppoſe *I am a dogge* (ſaith ſhe) yet I am one of the family, and therefore have right *to the crummes that fall.* So Lord, I have been a ſinner, yet I am thy creature; and not onely ſo, but ſuch a creature as thou haſt ſet over the reſt of the works of thy hands; and not only ſo, but one whom thou haſt admitted into thy Church by *Baptiſm*, whereby thou wouldſt bind me to give my ſelfe unto thee before-hand; and more than this, thou haſt brought me under the means, and therein haſt ſhewed thy will concerning my turning towards thee. Thou haſt not onely offered me conditions of peace, but wooed me by thy Miniſters to give up my ſelfe unto thee, as thine in thy Chriſt. Therefore I dare not ſuſpect thy good meaning towards me, or queſtion thy intendment, but reſolve to take thy counſell, and put my ſelfe upon thy mercy. I cannot think if thou hadſt meant to caſt me away, and not to own me for thine, thou wouldſt ever have kindled theſe deſires in me. But it is not this ſtate I reſt in, my purpoſe is to wait upon thee, untill thou doſt manifeſt

manifeſt thy ſelf farther unto me. It is not common favours that will content me (though I be unworthy of theſe) becauſe I heare of choiſe bleſſings towards thy choſen people, that thou entreſt into a peculiar covenant withall, *ſure mercies*, and ſuch as accompany ſalvation. Theſe be the favours I wait for at thy hand, *O viſit me with the ſalvation of thy choſen.* O remember me with the favour of thy people, that I may ſee *the good of thy choſen.* Whileſt the ſoul is thus exerciſed, more ſweetneſſe fals upon the *will* and *affections*, whereby they are drawn ſtill nearer unto God. The ſoul is in a getting and a thriving condition; For God delights to ſhew himſelfe gracious to thoſe that ſtrive to be well perſwaded of him, concerning his readineſſe to ſhew mercy to all that look towards him in Chriſt. In worldly things, how do we cheriſh hopes upon little grounds? if there ſhineth never ſo little hope of gain or preferment, we make after it: Why then ſhould we forſake our own mercy (which God offers to be our own, if we will embrace it) having ſuch certain grounds for our hope to reſt on?

Chap. 30.

Iſa. 55. 3.

Pſa. 106. 4, 5

Chap. 31.

It was the policy of the ſervants of *Benhadad* to watch if any word of *comfort* fell from the King of *Iſrael*, and when he named *Benhadad* his *Brother*, they *catched* preſently at that, and cheared themſelves. *Faith* hath a catching quality at whatſoever is near to lay hold on. Like the branches of the vine it windeth about that which is next, and ſtayes it ſelf upon it, ſpreading further and further ſtill. If *nature* taught *Benhadads* ſervants to lay hold upon any word of comfort that fell from the mouth of a cruel King; Shall not *grace* teach Gods children to lye in wait for a *token* that he will ſhew for good to them? How ſhould we ſtretch forth the arms of our *Faith* to him, that *ſtretcheth out his arms all the day long to a rebellious people*? God will never ſhut his boſome againſt thoſe, that in an humble obedience fly unto him: we cannot conceive too graciouſly of God. Can we have a fairer offer, than for God in Chriſt to make over himſelf unto us? which is more than if he ſhould make over a thouſand worlds; Therefore our chief care ſhould be firſt by *faith* to make this good, and then to make it uſefull unto us, by living upon it as our

Iſa. 65. 2.

chiefeſt

chiefeſt portion; which we ſhall do, 1. By proving God to be our God in particular, 2. By improving of it in all the paſſages of our lives. Chap. 31.

CHAP. XXXI.

Meanes of proving and evidencing to our ſouls, that God is our God.

NOw we prove it to our ſouls, that *God* is ours, when we take him at his offer, when we bring nothing but a ſenſe of our own emptineſſe with us, and a good conceit of his faithfulneſſe and ability to do us good, when we anſwer God in the particular paſſages of ſalvation, which we cannot do, till he begins unto us. Therefore if we be Gods, it is a certain ſigne that God is ours. If we chooſe him, we may conclude he hath choſen us firſt. If we love him, we may know that *he hath loved us firſt.* If we apprehend him, it is becauſe he hath apprehended us firſt. Whatſoever affection we ſhew to God, it is a reflexion of his firſt to us. If cold and dark bodies have light and heat in them, it is becauſe the Sun hath ſhined upon them firſt. *Mary* anſwers not *Rabboni* 2. 1 Joh. 4. 19.

Chap. 31.

till Christ said *Mary* to her. If we say to God, I am thine, it is because he hath first said unto us, Thou art mine; after which, the voice of the faithfull soul is, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine.* We may know Gods minde to us in heaven, by the return of our hearts upwards again to him: Only as the reflected beams are weaker then the direct, so our affections in their return to God, are far weaker than his love falling upon us. God will be to us whatsoever we make him by our *faith* to be; when by grace we answer his condition of *trusting*, then he becomes ours to use for our good.

2. We may know God to be [*Our God*] when we pitch and plant all our happinesse in him, when the desires of our souls are towards him, and we place all our contentment in him. As this word [*my*] is a term of *appropriation* springing from a speciall faith, so it is a word of *love* and peculiar *affection*, shewing that the soul doth repose and rest it self quietly and securely upon God. Thus *David* proves God to be *his* God, by *early seeking of him*, by *thirsting*, and *longing after his presence*, and that upon good reason,

because

becauſe Gods loving kindeneſſe was better to him than life; This he knew would *ſatisfie his ſoul as with marrow and fatneſſe*. So *S. Paul* proved Chriſt to be his Lord, by *accounting all elſe as dung and droſſe in compariſon of him*.

Then we make God *our* God, and ſet a Crown of Majeſty upon his head, when we ſet up a Throne for him in our hearts, where ſelf-love *before* had ſet up the creature above him; when the heart is ſo unlooſed from the world, that it is ready to part with any thing for Gods ſake, giving him *now* the ſupremacy in our hearts, and bringing down every high thought, in captivity to him; making him our *truſt*, our *love*, our *joy*, our *delight*, our *fear*, our *all*; and whatſoever we eſteem or affect elſe, to eſteem and affect it under him, in him, and for him; When we cleave to him above all, depending upon him as our chiefe good, and contenting our ſelves in him, as all-ſufficient to give our ſouls fit and full ſatisfaction. When we reſigne up our ſelves to his gracious government, to do and ſuffer what he will, offering our ſelves and all our ſpiritual ſervices as ſacrifices to him. When *faith* brings God

Chap. 31.

into the soul as ours, we not onely *love him*, but love him *dearly*, making it appear, that we are at good terms with God, we are at a point for other things. How many are there that will adventure the losse of the love of God for a thing of nothing, and redeeme the favour of men with the losse of Gods? Certain it is whatsoever we esteem, or affect most, that whatsoever it be in it self, yet we make it our God. The best of us all may take shame to our selves herein, in that we do not give God his due place in us, but set up some *Idoll* or other in our hearts above him.

Amor tuus, Deus tuus.

3. When the soul can without hypocrisie say [*My God*] it engageth us to universall and unlimited obedience, we shall be ambitious of doing that which may be acceptable and well pleasing to him; and therefore this is prefixed as a ground before the *Commandments*, enforcing obedience; *I am the Lord thy God*, therefore *thou shalt have no other Gods before me*; whomsoever else we obey, it must be *in the Lord*, because we see a beam of Gods authority in them; and it is no prejudice to any inferiour authority, to prefer Gods

Exod. 20.

authority

authority before it, in case of difference one from the other. Chap. 31.

When we know we are a *peculiar people*, we cannot but be zealous of *good works*. *If I be a Father, where is mine honour?* Special relations are special enforcements to duty.

4. The *Spirit of God* which knowes the deep things of God, and the depths of our hearts, doth reveale this mutuall interest betwixt God and those that are *his*, it being a principall work of the Spirit to seale this unto the soul, by discovering such a cleare and particular light in the use of means, as swayeth the soul to yeeld up it selfe wholly to GOD. When we truly trust, we may say with S. *Paul*, *I know whom I have trusted*; he knew both *that* he trusted, and *whom* he trusted. The *Spirit* of God that reveals God to be ours, and stirres up faith in him, both reveals this trust to our souls, and the interest we have in God thereby. *The Lord is my portion, saith my soul*: but God said so to it first. If instinct of nature teaches Dammes to know their young ones, and their *young ones* them, in the middest of those that are alike; shall not 4.

Chap. 31. the Spirit of God much more teach the soul to know its own father? As none knows what is in man, but the *spirit* of man, so none knows what love God bears to those that are *his*, but the Spirit of God in his: All the light in the world cannot discover the Sun unto us, only it discovers it self by its own beams. So all the Angels and Saints in heaven cannot discover to our souls the love that is in the breast of
Rom. 5. 5. God towards us, but only the Spirit of God, which *sheds it into our hearts*. The Spirit only teaches this language, *My God*. It is infused onely into sanctified hearts;
Mat. 11. 25. and therefore ofttimes *mean men* enjoy it, when great, wise and learned persons are strangers to it.

5. 5. The Spirit when it witnesseth this to us, is called the *Spirit of Adoption*, and hath alwaies accompanying of it a spirit of supplication, whereby with a familiar, yet reverend boldnesse, we lay open our hearts to God as a deare Father; All others are strangers to this heavenly entercourse. In straits they runne to their friends and carnall shifts, whereas an heir of heaven runs to his Father, and tels him of all.

6. Those

Chap. 31.

6. Thoſe that are Gods, are known to be his by ſpeciall love-tokens that he beſtows upon them. As 1. The ſpeciall graces of his Spirit. Princes children are known by their coſtly jewels, and rich ornaments. It is not common gifts, and glorious parts that ſet a character upon us to be Gods, but grace to uſe thoſe gifts, in humility and love, to the glory of the giver.

6. Speciall favours ſhew God to be our God.

1.

2. There is in them a ſuitableneſſe and connaturalneſſe of heart to all that is ſpirituall, to whatſoever hath Gods ſtamp upon it, as his *truth* and his *children*, and that becauſe they are *his*. By this likeneſſe of diſpoſition, we are faſhioned to a communion with him: Can two walk together and not be agreed? It is a certain evidence that we are Gods in Chriſt, if the Spirit of God hath wrought in us any impreſſion like unto Chriſt, who is the *image* of his Father; both Chriſt looking upon *us*, and our looking upon Chriſt by faith (as *ours*) hath a transforming and conforming power.

2.

3. Spiritual comforts in diſtreſſe, ſuch as the world can neither give, nor take away, ſhew that God looks upon the ſouls of

3.

Chap. 31. of his with another eye, then he beholdeth others. He sends a *secret* messenger that reports his *peculiar* love to their hearts. He knows *their souls*, and feeds them with his *hidden Manna?* the inward peace they feel, is not in freedome from trouble, but in freenesse with God in the midst of trouble.

4. 4. Seasonable and sanctified corrections wherby we are kept from being led away by the errour of the wicked, shew Gods fatherly care over us as *his*. Who will trouble himselfe in correcting another mans childe? yet we oftner complain of the smart we feel, than think of the tender heart and hand that smites us, until our spirits be subdued, and then we reap the quiet fruit of righteousnes. Where crosses *work together for the best*, we may know Rom. 8. 28. *that we love God*, and are loved of him. Thriving in a sinfull course, is a black mark of one that is not *Gods*.

7. 7. Then we make it appear that God is our God, when we side with him, and are for him and his cause in il times. When God seems to cry out unto us, *Who is on my side, who?* Then if we can say as those in *Esay*, whereof one sayes, *I am the Lords*, and

and another cals himself *by the Name of Jacob*, and another *ſubſcribes with his hand unto the Lord*, it is a bleſſed ſigne. Thus the Patriarchs, and Prophets, Apoſtles, and Martyrs, were not aſhamed of God, and God was not aſhamed to owne them. Provided that this boldneſſe for God proceed not only from a conviction of the judgement, but from ſpirituall experience of the goodneſſe of the cauſe, whereby we can juſtifie in heart what we juſtifie in words. Otherwiſe men may contend for that with others, which they have no intereſt in themſelves. The life muſt witneſſe for God as well as the tongue: it is oft eaſier for corrupt nature to part with life rather than with luſt. Chap. 31.

This ſiding with God, is with a ſeparation from whatſoever is contrary. God uſeth this as an argument to come out of *Babylon*, becauſe we are his people; *Come out of her* My *People*. Religion is nothing elſe but a gathering and a binding of the ſoul cloſe to God: that fire which gathers together the gold, ſeparates the droſſe. Nature draws out that which is wholſome in meats, and ſevers the contrary.

Chap. 31.

trary. The good that is to be had by God, is by cleaving to him, and him *only*. God loves an ingenuous and full proteſtation, if called to it. It ſhews the coldneſs of the times when there is not heat enough of zeal to ſeparate from a contrary faith. *God* is a jealous *God*, and ſo we ſhall finde him at laſt. When the day of ſevering comes, then they that have ſtood for him, ſhall not only be *his*, but his *treaſure*, and his jewels.

Mal. 3. 17.

There is none of us all but may ſome time or other fall into ſuch a great extremity, that when we look about us, we ſhall finde none to help us: at which time we ſhall throughly know, what it is to have comfort from Heaven, and a God to go unto. If there be any thing in the world worth labouring for, it is the getting ſound evidence to our ſouls that God is ours. What madneſſe is it to ſpend all our labour, to poſſeſſe our ſelves of the *Ciſtern*, when the fountain is offered to us? O beloved, the whole world cannot weigh againſt this one *comfort*, that God is ours. All things laid in the other ballance, would be too light. A *Moth* may corrupt, a *Theef* may take away that we have

have here, but who can take our God away? Though God doth convey ſome comfort to us by theſe things, yet when they are gone, he reſerves the comfort in himſelfe ſtill, and can convey *that*, and more, in a purer and ſweeter way, where he plants the grace of faith to fetch it from him. Why then ſhould we weaken our intereſt in God, for any thing this earth affords? What unworthy wretches are thoſe, that to pleaſe a ſinfull man, or to feed a baſe luſt, or to yeeld to a wicked cuſtome, will (as much as in them lyeth) loſe their intereſt in God? Such little conſider what an excellent privilege it is to have a ſure *refuge* to fly unto in time of trouble. God wants not wayes to maintain his, without being beholding to the devil: he hath all help hid in himſelf, and will then moſt ſhew it, when it ſhall make moſt for his own glory. If God be *ours*, it is a ſhame to be beholding to the devil, that ever it ſhould be ſaid, *Satan* by baſe courſes hath made us rich. God thinks any outward thing too mean for his children, ſevered from himſelf, therefore he gives his *Son* the expreſſe *image of himſelfe* unto them. For which cauſe

David

Chap. 32.

David when he had even ſtudied to reckon up the number of Gods choice bleſſings, concludes with advancing of *this above all, yea rather happy are they whoſe God is the Lord.* If this will not ſatisfie the ſoul, what can? Labour therefore to bring thy ſoul to this point with God, *Lord, if thou ſeeſt it fit, take away all from me, ſo thou leaveſt me thy ſelf: Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I deſire in compariſon of thee?*

CHAP. XXXII.

Of improving our evidences for comfort in ſeverall paſſages of our lives.

We ought to branch out the ſeveral excellencies in God for our ſpecial uſes.

THat we loſe not any meaſure of comfort in this ſo ſweet a prjviledge, we muſt labour for skill to improve, and implead the ſame in the ſeveral paſſages and occaſions of our lives, and let it appeare in the retayle, that whatſoever is in God is *mine*: If I am *in a perplexed condition*, his *wiſedome* is mine: If *in great danger*, his *power* is mine; If I lye ſighing *under the burthen of ſinne*, his *grace is mine*: If in any want, his *all-ſufficiency is mine: My God*

God (saith S. *Paul*) *will supply all your wants.* If in any danger, *I am thine Lord*, save me, I am thine, the price of thy Sons bloud, let me not be lost, thou hast given me the *earnest* of thy Spirit, and set thy seal upon me for thy own, let me neither lose my bargain, nor thou thine. What is Religion it selfe but a spirituall bond? whereby the soul is tyed to God as its own, and then singles out of God whatsoever is needfull for any occasion: and so binds God with his own covenant and promise. *Lord thou hast made thy self to be mine, therefore now shew thy self so, and be exalted in thy wisedome, goodnes, and power, for my defence. To walke comfortably in my Christian course, I need much grace, supply me out of thy rich store. I need wisedome to go in and out inoffensively before others, furnish me with thy Spirit. I need patience and comfort, thou that art the God of all consolation, bestow it on me.*

In time of desertion put Christ betwixt God and thy soul, and learn to appeal, from God *out* of *Christ*, to God *in* Christ. Lord look upon my Saviour, that is near unto thee as thy *Sonne*, near to me as my Brother, and now intercedes at thy right hand

Chap. 32.

hand for me; though I have ſinned, yet he hath ſuffered, and ſhed his precious bloud to make my peace. When we are in any trouble, let us ſtill wait on him, and lye at his feet, and never let him go till he caſt a gracious look upon us.

So if we be to deal with God, for the *Church* abroad, we may alledge unto him that whatſoever provocations are therein, and deformity in regard of abuſes and ſcandals: yet it is his *Church*, his *people*, his *inheritance*, his name is called upon in it, and the enemies of *it* are *his* enemies. God hath engaged himſelf to the friends of the *Church*, that *they ſhall proſper that love it*, and therefore we may with a holy boldneſſe preſſe him for a bleſſing upon the ſame.

Pſa. 122.6.

So for our *Children* and poſterity, we may encline God to reſpect them, becauſe they are under his *Covenant*, who hath promiſed to be *our God*, and the God of *our Seed*; *Thine they were, thou gaveſt them me: all that I have is thine, theſe are thoſe children which thou of thy rich grace haſt given me. They are thine more then mine, I am but a meanes under thee to bring them into the world, and to be a Nurſe unto thy children:*

Joh. 17.

children; *Take care therefore of thine own children I beseech thee (especially) when I can take no care of them my self, thou slumbrest not, thou dyest not, I must.*

Chap. 32.

Flesh and *bloud* think nothing is cared for, but what it seeth cared for by it self. It hath no eyes to see a guard of *Providence*, a guard of *Angels*. It takes no knowledge that that is best cared for, that God cares for. Those that have God for *their God*, have enlarged hearts as they have enlarged comforts. They have an everlasting spring that supplies them in all wants, refreshes them in all troubles, and then runnes most clearely and freshly, when all other streames in the world are dryed and stopt up. Were we skillfull in the *art* of *faith*, to improve so great an interest, what in the world could much dismay us? *faith* will set God against all.

It should fill our hearts with an holy indignation against our selves, if either we rest in a condition, wherein we cannot truly say God is [Our God] or (if when we can in some sincerity of heart say *this*) that we make no better advantage thereby, and maintain not our selves answer-

Chap. 32.

able to such a condition. What a shame is it for a Noble mans sonne to live like a begger? for a great rich man to live like a poor peasant? to famish at a banquet? to fall when we have so many stayes to lay hold on? Whereas if we could make this clear to our souls, that *God* is *ours*, and then take up our thoughts with the great riches we have in *him*, laid open in Christ, and in the promises, we need trouble our selves about nothing, but only get a large vessell of *faith*, to receive what is offered, nay enforced upon us.

When we can say, *God is our God*, it is more then if we could say, *Heaven* is mine; or whatever good the creature affords is mine. Alas, what is all this, to be able to say, *God is mine*, who hath in him the sweetnesse of all these things, and infinite more? If God be *ours*, goodnesse it self is ours. If he be not *ours*, though we had all things else, yet ere long *nothing would be ours*. What a wondrous comfort is this, that God hath put himselfe over to be ours? That a beleeving soul may say with as great confidence (and greater too) that *God* is his, then he can say his house is his, his treasure is his, his friends

frsends are his? Nothing is ſo much *ours* as God is ours, becauſe by his being ours in *covenant*, all other things become *ours*: And if God be once ours, well may wee *truſt* in him. *God* and *ours* joyned together, make up the full comfort of a Chriſtian. [*God*] there is all to be had; but what is that to *me*, unleſs he be *my God? All-ſufficiency with propriety fully ſtayeth the ſoul.* Chap. 32.

David was now baniſhed from the Sanctuary, from his friends, habitation, and former comforts; but was he baniſhed from his God? No, God was *his* God ſtill. When *riches*, and *friends*, and *life* it ſelf ceaſe to be *ours*, yet God never loſeth his right in us, nor we our intereſt in him. This comfort that *God is ours*, reacheth unto the *reſurrection of our bodies*, and to *life everlaſting*. God is the God of *Abraham*, (and ſo of every true beleever) even when his body is turned into duſt. Hence it is that *the loving kindeneſſe of the Lord is better then life*, becauſe when *life* departs, yet we live for ever in him. When *Moſes* ſaw the people drop away ſo faſt in the *wilderneſs*, and wither like graſs, *Thou art our foundation* (ſaith he) *from one*

Chap. 32.

generation to another: thou art God from everlasting to everlasting. When we leave the world, and are no more seen here, yet we have a dwelling place in God for ever. God is ours from everlasting in *election*, and to everlasting in *glory*, protecting us here, and glorifying us hereafter. *David* that claimed God to be *his God* is gone, but *Davids God* is alive. And *David* himself (*though his flesh see corruption,*) yet is alive in his God still.

That which is said of wily persons that are full of fetches and windings, and turnings in the world, that such will never break, may much more truly be said of a right godly man, that hath but one grand policy to secure him in all dangers, which is to runne to his God as to his tower of offence and defence: such a one will never be at a desperate losse so long as God hath any credit, because he never faileth those that fly unto him, and that because his mercy and truth never fails. The very *lame* and the *blinde*, the most shiftless creatures when they had gotten the *strong hold of Zion*, thought then they might securely *scorn David and his hoast*, because though they were weak in themselves, yet their

2 Sam. 5. 6, 7.

hold

hold was ſtrong; but we ſee their hold failed them at length, which a Chriſtian will never do. Chap. 32

But God ſeems to have ſmall care of thoſe that are his in the world, thoſe who beleeve themſelves to be his jewels, *are counted the* off-ſcouring of the world, *and moſt deſpiſed* Queſt.

We muſt know that ſuch have a glorious life in God, but it is *hidden with Chriſt in God*, from the eyes of the world, and ſometimes from their own; here they are hidden under infirmities, afflictions, and diſgraces, but yet never ſo hidden, but that God ſometimes lets downe a beame of comfort and ſtrength, which they would not loſe to be freed from their preſent condition, though never ſo grievous. God comes more immediately to them now, than formerly he was uſed; nay, even when *God* ſeems to forſake them (and to be their enemy) yet they are ſupported with ſuch inward ſtrength, that they are able to make good their claim with *Chriſt* their head, and cry *My God* ſtill; God never ſo departs, but he always leaves ſomewhat behind him, which draws and keeps the heart to him. We are like poor *Hagar*, who when the *bottle of water* was ſpent *fell* Anſw. Gen. 21.13

Chap. 32.

a crying, when there was a fountain close by, but her tears hindred her from seeing it; When things go ill with us in our trades and callings, and all is spent, then our spirits droop, and we are at our wits end, as if God were not where he was. Oh consider if we had all and had not God, we had nothing: If we have nothing, and have God, we have enough, for we have him that hath all, and more then all at his command. If we had all other comforts that our hearts can desire, yet if *God* withdraw himselfe, what remains but a curse and emptinesse? What makes *heaven* but the presence of *God*? And what makes *hell* but the absence of God? Let God be in any condition, though never so ill, yet it is comfortable, and usually we find more of God in trouble, than when we are out of trouble; the comforts of Religion never come till other fail. Cordials are kept for faintings. When a curtain and a vaile is drawn betwixt us and the creature, then our eyes are only upward to God, and he is more clearly seen of us.

God the Saints portion.

In the division of things *God* bequeaths himself to those that are *his*, for their portion, as the best portion he can give them

them. There are many goodly things in the world, but none of theſe are a Chriſtians portion, there is in him to ſupply all good, and remove all ill, until the time come that we ſtand in need of no other good. It is our chief wiſdom to *know* him, our *holineſs* to love him, our *happineſs* to enjoy him. Ther is in him to be had whatſoever can truly make us happy. We goe to our *treaſure*, and our *portion* in all our wants, we live by it, and value our ſelves by it. God is ſuch a portion, that the more we ſpend on him, the more we may. *Our ſtrength may faile*, and *our heart may faile*, but *God is our portion for ever*. Every thing elſe teaches us by the vanity and vexation we finde in them, that our happineſs is not in them, they ſend us to *God*; they may make us worſe, but better they cannot. Our nature is above them, and ordained for a greater good; they can go but along with us for a while, and their end ſwallows up all the comfort of their beginning, as *Pharaohs* lean Kine ſwallowed up the fat. If we have no better *portion* here than theſe things, we are like to have hell for our *portion* hereafter. What a *ſhame will* it be hereafter when we are ſtript of all,

Chap. 32.

Pſa. 73. 26.

Chap. 32.

it ſhould be ſaid, Loe this is the man that took not God for his portion. If God be once ours, he goes for ever along with us, and when *earth* will hold us no longer *heaven* ſhall. Who, that hath his ſenſes about him, wold periſh for want of water, when there is a fountain by him? or for hunger, that is at a feaſt? God alone is a rich portion; O then let us labour for a large *faith*, as we have a large *object*; If we had a thouſand times more faith, we ſhould have a thouſand times more encreaſe of Gods bleſſings. When the Prophet came to the *widows houſe*, as many veſſels as ſhe had
1 Ki.17.14. *were filled with oyl*; we are ſtraitned in our own *faith*, but not ſtraitned in our God. It fals out oft in this world that *Gods* people are like *Iſrael* at the Red Sea, invironed with dangers on al ſides: What *courſe* have we then to take, but *only* to look up & *wait* for the *ſalvation* of our *God*? This is a *breaſt* full of *conſolation*, let us teach our hearts to ſuck, and draw comfort from hence.

Is God *our* God; and will he ſuffer any thing to befall us for our *hurt*? Will he lay any *more* upon us, than he gives us *ſtrength* to bear? Will he ſuffer any winde to blow upon us but for good? Doth he not ſet

Chap. 32.

us before his face? Will a Father or Mothee ſuffer a childe to be wronged in their preſence, if they can help it? Will a friend ſuffer his friend to be injured, if he may redreſſe him? And will God that hath put theſe affections into parents and friends, neglect the care of thoſe he hath taken ſo near unto himſelfe? No ſurely, his *eyes* are open to look upon their condition; his *ears* are open to their prayers; a *book of remembrance* is written of all their good deſires, ſpeeches, and actions; he hath *bottles* for all their tears, their very *ſighs* are not *hid from him*; he hath written them upon the *palms of his hands*, and cannot but continually look upon them. Oh let us prize the favour of ſo good a God, who though he dwels *on high*, yet will regard things *ſo low*, and not neglect the mean eſtate of any; Nay, eſpecially delights to be called the *comforter of his Elect*, and the God of thoſe that are in miſery, and have none to fly unto but himſelf. Mal. 3. 16.

But we muſt know that God *onely* thus graciouſly viſits his owne *children*, he viſits with his choiceſt favours thoſe only that *feare his Name*. As for thoſe that

either

Chap. 32.

either ſecretly undermine, or openly oppoſe the cauſe, and Church of God, and joyn with his enemies; ſuch as ſavour not the things of God, but commit ſpirituall Idolatry, and Adultery with Gods enemies, *the world*, and *the devil*; God will anſwer theſe, as once he did the *Iſraelites* (when in their neceſſity they would have forced acquaintance upon him) *Go to the Gods whom ye have ſerved*, to the *great men* whoſe perſons you have obeyed for advantage: to your *riches*, to your *pleaſures*, which you have loved more than God or goodneſſe: you would not loſe a baſe *cuſtome*. an *oath*, a *ſuperfluity*, a thing of nothing for me, therefore I will not own you now. Such men are more impudent then the *devil* himſelfe, that will claim acquaintance with God at laſt, when they have carried themſelves as his enemies all their dayes. *Satan* could tell *Paul* and *Silas*, they were *the ſervants of the living God*, but he would not make that plea for himſelf, knowing that he was a curſed creature.

Jud. 10.14.

Act. 16.17.

Miſerable then is their condition who *live in the world*, (nay in the Church) *without God*. Such are in a worſe eſtate than

than *Pagans* and *Jews*; for living in the house of God, they are strangers from God, and from the *Covenant of grace*; usurping the name of Christians, having indeed nothing to do with Christ. Chap. 32.

Some of these like spiritual vagabonds, as *Cain*, excommunicate themselves from Gods presence in the use of the means; or rather like devils, that will have nothing to do with God; because they are loth to be tormented before their time; they think every good Sermon an arraigning of them, and therefore keep out of reach.

Others will present themselves under the meanes, and carry some savour away with them of what they heare, but it is only till they meet with the next temptation, unto which they yeeld themselves presently slaves. These shrowd themselves under a *generall profession*, as they did, who called themselves *Jewes*, and were nothing lesse. But alas an empty title will bring an empty comfort at last. It was cold comfort to the *rich man* in flames, that *Abraham* called him *sonne*, Or to *Judas*, that Christ called him *friend*. Or to the rebellious *Jewes*, that God stiles them *his people*. Such as our profession Luk. 16.

Chap. 32.

feſſion is, ſuch will our comfort be. True profeſſion of Religion is another thing than moſt men take it to be; it is made up of the outward duty, and the *inward man* too; which is indeed the life and ſoul of all. What the heart doth not in Religion, is not done.

God cares for no Retainers that will only wear his *livery*, but ſerve themſelves. *What haſt thou to do to take his Name into thy mouth, and hateſt to be reformed?* *Saul* lived in the boſome of the *Church*, yet (being a cruell Tyrant) when he was in a deſperate plunge, his outward *profeſſion* did him no good. And therefore when he was invironed with his enemies; he uttered this dolefull complaint, *God hath forſaken me, and the Philiſtims are upon me*; A pitifull caſe; yet ſo will it be with all thoſe that *reſt* in an outward profeſſion, thinking it enough to complement with God, when their hearts are not right within them. Such will at length be forced to cry, *Sickneſſe* is upon me, *death* is upon me, *hell* is before me, and God hath forſaken me. I would none of God heretofore, now God will have none of me. When *David* himſelf had offended God by *numbring the people*,

People, then God counted him but plaine *David*, *Go and say to David*, &c. whereas before when he purposed to build a *Temple*, then *Go tell my servant David*. When the *Israelites* had set up an *Idoll*, then God fathers them on *Moses*, *Thy people which thou hast brought out of Egypt*: he would not owne them as at other times, then; *they are* my *people* still whilest they keep covenant. No care, no present comfort in this near *relation*. Chap. 32.

The price of the *Pearl* is not known till all else be sold, and we see the necessary use of it. So the worth of God in Christ is never discerned, till we see our lost and undone condition without him, till conscience flyes in our faces, and drags us to the brink of hell; *then* if ever we taste *how good the Lord is*, we will say, *Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord*. Heretofore I have heard of his loving kindenesse, but that is not a thousand part of what I see and feel. The joy I now apprehend is unutterable, *unconceivable*.

Oh then when we have gotten our souls possest of God, let our study be, to preserve our selves in his love, to walk close with him, that he may delight to abide with

Chap. 32.

with us, and never forsake us. How basely doth the Scripture speak of whatsoever stands in our way? It makes nothing of them. What is *man* but *vanity*, and lesse than *vanity*? *All Nations* but as *a drop of the bucket*, as the *dust of a ballance*; things not at all considerable. *Flesh* looks upon them as through a multiplying glass, making them greater then they are; but *faith* (as God doth) sees them as nothing.

What preserves the sense of Gods favour.

This is such a blessed condition, as may well challenge all our diligence in labouring to be assur'd of it; neither is it to be attained or maintained without the strength and prime of our care. I speak especially of, and in regard of the sense and comfort of it. For the sense of Gods favour will not be kept without keeping him in our best affections above all things in the world, without keeping of our hearts alwaies close and near to him, which cannot be without keeping a most narrow watch over our loose and unsetled hearts, that are ready to stray from God, and fall to the creature. It cannot be kept without exact and circumspect walking, without constant self-denial, without a continual preparation of spirit, to want and forsake any thing

Chap. 32.

thing that God ſeeth fit to take from us.

But what of all this? Can we croſſe our ſelves, or ſpend our labours to better purpoſe? one ſweet beam of Gods countenance will requite all this. We beat not the ayre, we plow not in the ſand, neither ſow in a barren ſoyle, God is no barren wilderneſſe. Nay, he never ſhewes ſo much of himſelf, as in ſuffering, and parting with any thing for him, and denying our ſelves of that which we thinke ſtands not with his will. Great perſons require great obſervance. We can deny our ſelves, and have mens perſons in great admiration, for hope of ſome advantage; and is any more willing and more able to advance us then the great All-ſufficient God? A Chriſtian indeed, undergoes more troubles, takes more pains (eſpecially with his own heart) then others do. But what are theſe to his gaines? What returne ſo rich, as trading with God? What comforts ſo great as theſe that are fetched from the fountain? One day ſpent in enjoying the light of Gods countenance, is ſweeter than a thouſand without it. We ſee here, when *David* was not only ſhut out from all comforts, but

lay

Chap. 32.

lay under many grievances, what a fruitfull use he makes of this, that God was his God. It upholdeth his dejected, it stilleth his unquiet soul: it leadeth him to *the rock that was higher than he*, and there stayeth him. It filleth him with comfortable hopes of better times to come. It sets him above himself, and all troubles and fears whatsoever.

Therefore wait still in the use of *means* till God shine upon thee; yea, though we know our sins in Christ are pardoned, yet there is something more that a gracious heart waits for, that is, a good look from God, a further enlargement of heart, and an *establishing* in grace. It was not enough for *David* to have his sins pardoned, but to *recover the joy of salvation*, and *freedom of spirit*. Therefore the soul should allwaies be in a waiting condition, even until it be filled with the fulness of God, as much as it is capable of. Neither is it quiet alone, or comfort alone, that the soul longs after, no, nor the favour of God alone, but a gracious heart to walk worthy of God. It rests not whilest any thing remains, that may breed the least strangenesse betwixt God and us.

Psa. 51.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of experience, and faith, and how to wait on God comfortably. Helps thereto.

[*My God*]

THeſe words further imply a ſpeciall experience, that *Davids* ſoul had felt of the goodneſſe of God, he had found God diſtilling the comfort of his goodneſſe and truth through the promiſes, and he knew he ſhould finde God again the ſame he was, if he put him in minde of his former gracious dealing. His ſoul *knew right well*, how *good God was*, and he could ſeale to thoſe truths he had found comfort by, therefore he thus ſpeakes to his ſoul, *My ſoul*, what *my ſoul*, that haſt found God ſo good, ſo oft, ſo many wayes, thou *My ſoul* to be diſcouraged, having God, and *My God*, with whom I have taken ſo much ſweet counſell, and felt ſo much comfort from, and found alwayes heretofore to ſtick ſo cloſe unto me? Why ſhouldſt thou now be in ſuch a caſe, as if God and thou had beene ſtrangers one to another. If we could treaſure up experiments, the former

Chap. 33.

part of our life would come in to help the latter, and the longer we live, the richer in *faith* we ſhould be. Even as in victories every former overthrow of an enemy, help to obtain a ſucceeding victory. The uſe of a ſanctified memory, is to loſe nothing that may help in time of need. He had need be a well tryed, and a known friend, upon whom we lay all our ſalvation and comfort.

God to be truſted, though never tried.

We ought to truſt God upon other grounds, though we had never tried him: but when he helps our faith by former experience, this ſhould ſtrengthen our confidence, and ſhore up our ſpirits, and put us on to go more chearfully to God, as to a tried friend. If we were well read in the ſtory of our owne lives, we might have a *divinity* of our own, drawn out of the obſervation of Gods particular dealing towards us; we might ſay *This* and *this truth*, I dare venture upon, I have found it true, I dare build all my happineſſe upon it. As *Paul*, *I know whom I have truſted*, I have tryed him, he never yet failed me, I am not now to learn how faithfull he is to thoſe that are his. Every new experience is a new knowledge of God,

and

and ſhould fit us for new encounters. If we have been good in former times, God remembers the *kindeneſs of our youth*; we ſhould therefore remember the kindeneſſe of God even from our youth. Evidence of what we have felt, helps our faith in that, which for the preſent we feel not. Chap. 33. Jer. 2. 2.

Though it be one thing to live by *faith*, and another thing to live by *ſight*, yet the more we ſee, and feel, and taſte of God, the more we ſhall be led to rely on him, for that which as yet we neither ſee nor feel: *Becauſe thou haſt been my helper* (ſaith David) *therefore in the ſhadow of thy wings will I rejoyce.* The time was Lord, when thou ſhewedſt thy ſelf a gracious Father to me, and thou art unchangeable in thy nature, in thy love, and in thy gifts. Pſa. 63. 7.

Yea, when there is no preſent evidence, but God ſhewes himſelfe as contrary to us, yet a former taſte of Gods goodneſſe will enable to lay claim unto him ſtill. Gods concealing of himſelf is but a wiſe diſcipline for a time, until we be enabled to bear the full revealing of himſelf unto us for ever. In the mean time, though we have ſome ſight and feeling of God,

Chap. 33.

yet our constant living is not by it: the evidence of that we see not, is that which more constantly upholds the soul, than the evidence of any thing we see or feel.

Yea though our experience by reason of our not minding of it in trouble, seems many times to stand us in no stead, but we fare as if God had never looked in mercy upon us: Yet (even here) some vertue remains of former sense, which with the present spirit of faith, helps us to look upon God as *ours*. As we have a present strength from food received, and digested before; vessels are something the better for that liquor they keep not, but runs through them.

But if experience should wholly fail, there is such a divine power in faith, as a very little beam of it, having no other help than a naked promise, will uphold the soul; howsoever we must neglect no help, for God oft suspends his comfort till we have searched all our helps. Though we see no *light*, yet we ought to search all crevises for light, and rejoyce in the least beame of light, that we may see day by. It is the nature of true *faith*, to search and pry into every corner, and if after all,

all, nothing appears, then it caſts it ſelfe upon God, as in the firſt converſion, when it had nothing to look upon but the offer of free mercy. If at that time without former experience, we did *truſt God*; why not now, when we have forgotten our experience? The chiefe grounds of truſting God, are alwaies the ſame, whether we feel or feel not; nay, though for the preſent we feele the contrary, *faith* will never leave wraſtling, till it hath gotten a bleſſing. When *faith* is driven to work *alone*, having nothing but God, and his bare promiſe to relye upon, then God thinks it lies upon his credit to ſhew himſelf as a God unto us. Gods power in creating light out of darkneſs, is never more exalted, then when a guilty ſoul is lift up by God to look for mercy, even when he ſeems armed with juſtice, to execute vengeance upon him, then the ſoule is brought to a neer conformity unto Chriſt, who 1. when he had the guilt of the ſins of the whole world upon him; 2. when he was forſaken, and then after he had enjoyed the ſweeteſt communion with his Father that ever creature could doe; and not only ſo, but 3. felt

Chap. 33.

The conformity of the ſoul to *Chriſt*.

1.

2.

3.

Chap. 33. 4.

the weight of *Gods* juſt diſpleaſure againſt ſin; and 4. was abaſed lower than ever any creature was: yet *ſtill* he held faſt God as his God.

In earthly matters, if we have a *Title* to any thing by gift, contract, inheritance, or howſoever, we will not be wrangled out of our right. And ſhall we not maintain our right in *God*, againſt all the tricks and cavils of Satan and our own hearts? We muſt labour to have ſomething, that we may ſhew that we are within the covenant. If we be never ſo little entred into the covenant, we are ſafe. And herein lyes the ſpeciall comfort of ſincerity, that though our grace be little, yet it is of the right ſtamp, and ſhewes us, that we are ſervants, and ſons, though unworthy to be ſo. Here a little truth will go farre. Hence it is that the Saints in all their extremities, ſtill alledge ſomething, that ſhews that they are within the covenant, *We are thy children, thy people, and thy ſervants*, &c. God is mindefull of his *covenant*, but is well pleaſed, that we ſhould minde him of it too, and minde it our ſelves to make uſe of it, as *David* doth here. He knew if he could bring his ſoul

to

to his God, all would be quiet. Chap. 33.

God is ſo ready to mercy, that he delighteth in it, and delighteth in Chriſt, through whom he may ſhew mercy notwithſtanding his juſtice, as being fully ſatisfied in Chriſt. *Mercy* is his *name* that he will be known by. It is his *glory* which we behold in the face of *Chriſt*, who is nothing but grace and mercy it ſelf. Nay, he pleads reaſons for mercy, even from the ſinfulneſſe and miſery of his creature, and maintains his owne mercy againſt all the wrangling cavils of fleſh and bloud, that would put mercy from them; and hearken more willingly to *Satans* objections, than Gods arguments, till at length God ſubdues their ſpirits ſo farre, as they become aſhamed for ſtanding out ſo long againſt him. How ready will God be to ſhew mercy to us when we ſeek it, that thus preſſeth upon us, when we ſeem to refuſe it? If God ſhould take advantage of our waywardneſſe, what would become of us? Satans courſe is to diſcourage thoſe that God would have encouraged, and to encourage thoſe whom God never ſpeaks peace unto, and he thinks to gain both wayes. Our care

Chap. 33.

therefore ſhould be, when we reſolve upon Gods wayes, to labour that no diſcouragement faſten upon us, ſeeing God and his Word ſpeak all comfort to us.

And becauſe the beſt of a Chriſtian is to come, we ſhould raiſe up our ſpirits to *wait* upon God, for that mercy which is yet to come. All inferiour waitings for good things here, do but train us up in the comfortable expectation of the main.

Waiting difficult.

This *waiting* on God, requires a great ſtrength of grace, by reaſon not onely 1. of the excellency of the things waited for, (which are far beyond any thing we 2. can hope for in the world.) But 2. in regard of the long day which God takes before he performeth his promiſe, and 3. from 3. thence the tediouſneſſe of delay. 4. The 4. many troubles of life in our way. 5. The 5. great oppoſition we meet with in the 6. world; 6. and *ſcandals* oftimes even from them that are in great eſteem for 7. Religion; 7. together with the untowardneſſe of our nature in being ready to be put off by the leaſt diſcouragement. In theſe reſpects there muſt be more than a humane ſpirit to hold up the ſoul, and carry

carry it along to the end of that which we wait for. Chap. 33.

But if God be our God, that love which engaged him to binde *himſelfe* to us in precious promiſes; will furniſh us likewiſe with grace needfull, till we be poſſeſſed of them. He will give us leave to depend upon him both for happineſſe, and all ſanctifying and quieting graces, which may ſupport the ſoul, till it come to its perfect reſt in God. For God ſo quiets the hearts of his children, as withall, he makes them better, and fitter for *that* which he provides for them; *grace* and *peace* go together; *Our God* is the God of grace and peace, of ſuch graces as breed peace.

1. As he is a God of *love*, nay love *it ſelf* to us, ſo a taſte of his *love*, raiſing up our love is better than *wine*, full of nothing but encouragement; it will fetch up a ſoul from the deepeſt diſcouragement; this grace quickneth all other graces, it hath ſo much ſpirits in it as will ſweeten all conditions. *Love* enables to wait, as *Jacob* for *Leah* ſeven years. Nothing is hard to *love*; it carries all the powers of the ſoul with it. 1. Gen. 29.

2. As

Chap. 33. 2. As he is a God of *hope*, ſo by this grace as an *anchor* faſtned in heaven within the vaile, he ſtayeth the ſoule; that though as a Ship at Anchor, it may be toſſed and moved, yet not removed from its ſtation. This *hope*, as cork will keep the ſoul (though in ſome heavineſs) from ſinking, and as an *Helmet* bear off the blows that they endanger not our life.

Eph. 6.

3. As God is a God of *hope*, ſo by hope of *patience*, which is a grace whereby the ſoul reſigneth up it ſelfe to God in humble ſubmiſſion to his will, becauſe he is *our God*, as *David* in extremity *comforted himſelf in the Lord his God*. Patience breeds comfort, becauſe it brings experience with it of Gods owning of us to be *His*. The ſoul *ſhod* and fenced with *this*, is prepared againſt all rubs and thorns in our way, ſo as we are kept from taking offence. All troubles we ſuffer, do but help *patience* to its *perfect work*, by ſubduing the unbroken ſturdineſſe of our ſpirits, when we feel by experience, we get but more blows, by ſtanding out againſt God.

Eph. 6.

Rom. 5. 3.

4. The Spirit of God (likewiſe) is a ſpirit of meekneſs, whereby though the ſoul

ſoul be ſenſible of evil, yet it moderates ſuch diſtempers, as would otherwiſe rob a man of himſelfe; and together with *patience* keepeth the *ſoul in poſſeſſion* of it ſelfe. It ſtayes murmurings and frettings againſt God or man. It ſets and keeps the ſoul in tune. It is that which God (as he works, ſo he) much *delights in*, and *ſets a price upon it*, as the chief ornament of the ſoul. The *meek of the earth ſeek God, and are hid in the day of his wrath*; whereas high ſpirits that compaſs themſelves with *pride* as with a *chain*, thinking to ſet out themſelves by that which is their ſhame, are looked upon by God *afar off*. Meek perſons will bow when others break; they are raiſed when others are pluckt down, and ſtand when others that mount upon the wings of vanity *fall*, theſe prevaile by yeelding, and are Lords of themſelves, and other things elſe, more than other unquiet ſpirited men: the bleſſings of *heaven* and *earth* attend on theſe.

Chap. 33.

Zeph. 2. 3.

Pſa. 73. 1.

Mat. 5. 5.

5. So likewiſe contentednesſe with our eſtate, is needful for a waiting condition, and this we have in *Our God* being able to give the ſoul full ſatisfaction. For outward things God knows how to diet us;

5.

If

Chap. 33.

If our condition be not to our minde, he will bring our minde to our condition. If the ſpirit be too bigge for the condition, it is never quieted, therefore God will levell both. Theſe wants be well ſupplyed that are made up with contentednesſe, and with riches of a higher kinde. If the *Lord* be our *Shepherd*, we can *want nothing*. This lifteth the *weary hands and feeble knees*, even under *chaſtiſement*, wherein though the ſoul mourneth in the ſenſe of Gods diſpleaſure, yet it rejoyceth in his Fatherly care.

6. 6. But *patience* and *contentment* are too low a condition for the ſoul to reſt in, therefore the Spirit of God ariſeth it up to a ſpiritual enlargement of *joy*. So much *joy*, ſo much *light*; and ſo much *light*, ſo much ſcattering of *darkneſſe of ſpirit*. We ſee in nature how a little light will prevail over the thickeſt clouds of darkneſſe, a little fire waſtes a great deal of droſſe. The knowledge of God to be *our God*, brings ſuch a light of *joy* into the ſoul, as driveth out dark uncomfortable conceits; this light makes lightſome. If the light of knowledge alone makes bold, much more the light of *joy* ariſing from

from our communion and intereſt in *God*. How can we enjoy God, and not joy in him? A ſoul truly cheerfull rejoyceth that God whom it loveth, ſhould think it worthy to endure any thing for him. This *joy* often ariſeth to a ſpirit of *glory*, even in mattter of outward abaſement; if the trouble accompanied with diſgrace continue, *the Spirit of glory reſts upon us*, and it will *reſt* ſo long, until it make us more than Conquerors, even then when we ſeem conquered: for not onely the *cauſe*, but the *ſpirit* riſeth higher, the more the enemies labour to keep it under, as we ſee in *Steven*. Chap. 33. Act. 7.

With this *joy* goeth a ſpirit of *courage* and *confidence*. What can daunt that ſoul, which in the greateſt troubles hath made the great God to be its owne? Such a ſpirit dares bid defiance to all oppoſite power, ſetting the ſoul above the world, having a ſpirit larger and higher than the world, and ſeeing *all* (but God) beneath it, as being in heaven already in its *head*. After *Moſes* and *Micah* had ſeen God in his favour to them, how little did they regard the angry countenances of thoſe mighty Princes, that were in their times the

Chap. 33.

the terrours of the world? The courage of a Christian is not only against sensible danger, and of flesh and blood, but against *principalities and powers of darkness*, against the whole *kingdome of Satan*, the god of the world, whom he knows *shortly* shall be *trodden under his feet*. Satan and his may for a time exercise us, but they cannot hurt us. True Beleevers are so many *Kings* and *Queenes*, so many Conquerours over that which others are slaves to: they can overcome themselves in *revenge*, they can despise those things that the world admires, and see an excellency in that which the *world* sets light by, *they* can set upon spirituall duties, which the *world* cannot tell how to goe about, and endure that which others tremble to think of, and that upon wise reasons, and a sound foundation, they can put off themselves, and be content to be nothing, so their God may appear the greater, and dare undertake and undergoe any thing for the glory of their God. This courage of Christians among the *Heathens* was counted *obstinacy*, but they knew not the power of the Spirit of Christ *in his*, which is ever strongest, when they are weakest in

Rom. 16. 20

Tertul. in Apologet.

in themſelves, *they* knew not the privy armour of proof that Chriſtians had about their hearts, and thereupon counted their courage to be obſtinacy. Chap. 33.

Some think the Martyrs were too prodigall of their bloud, and that they might have been better adviſed; but ſuch are unacquainted with the force of the love of God kindled in the heart of his childe, which makes him ſet ſuch a high price upon Chriſt and his truth, that he counts not *his life dear unto him*; He knows he is *not his own*, but hath given up himſelf to *Chriſt*, and therefore all that is his, yea, if he had more lives to give for Chriſt, he ſhould have them. He knows he ſhall be no loſer by it. He knows it is not a loſſe of his life, but an exchange for a better. Act. 20. 24.

We ſee the creatures that are under us, will be couragious in the eye of their Maſters, that are of a *ſuperiour* nature above them, and ſhall not a Chriſtian be couragious in the preſence of his great Lord and Maſter, who is preſent with him, about him, and in him? undoubtedly he that hath ſeen God once in the face of Chriſt, dares look the grimeſt creature in the face, yea death it ſelf under any ſhape.

The

Chap. 33.

The fear of all things flyes before ſuch a ſoule. Onely a Chriſtian is not aſhamed of his confidence. Why ſhould not a Chriſtian be as bold for his God, as others are for the baſe gods they make to themſelves?

7. 7. Beſides a ſpirit of *courage* (for eſtabliſhing the ſoul) is required a ſpirit of *conſtancy*, whereby the ſoul is ſteeſed and preſerved immoveable in all conditions, whether preſent or to come, and is not changed in changes. And why? but becauſe the ſpirit knows that God on whom it reſts is unchangeable. We our ſelves are as quickſilver unſetled and moveable, till the ſpirit of conſtancy fixe us. We ſee *David* ſets out God in glorious terms, borrowed from all that is ſtrong in the *creature*, to ſhew that he had great reaſon to be conſtant, and cleaving to him. *He is my Rock, my Buckler, the horn of my ſalvation, my ſtrong tower*, &c. God is a rock ſo *deep*, that no flouds can undermine; ſo high, that no waves can reach, though they riſe never ſo high, and rage never ſo much. When we ſtand upon this *Rock* that is *higher than we*, we may overlook all waves, ſwelling, and foaming, and break-

breaking themſelves, but not hurting us. And thereupon may triumphantly conclude with the Apoſtle, That *neither height, nor depth, ſhall ever ſeparate us from the love of God.* What ſoever is in the creature he found in his God, and more abundant; the ſoul cannot with an eye of faith look upon God in Chriſt, but it will be in its degree as God is quiet and *conſtant*, the ſpirit aimeth at ſuch a condition as it beholdeth in God towards it ſelfe. Chap. 33. Rom. 8. 39.

This conſtancy is upheld by endeavouring to keep a conſtant ſight of God, for want of which it oft fares with us, like men, that having a City or Tower in their eye, paſſing through uneven grounds, hils and dales, ſometimes get the ſight thereof, ſometimes loſe it, and ſometimes recover it again, though the *Tower* be ſtill where it was, and they nearer to it than they were at firſt. So it is oft with our uneven ſpirits; when once we have a ſight of God, upon any preſent diſcouragement, we let fall our ſpirits, and loſe the ſight of him, untill by an eye of *faith* we recover it again, and ſee him ſtill to bee where he was at firſt. The cheriſhing of

Chap. 34.

passions take away the sight of God, as clouds take away the sight of the Sunne: though the Sun be still where it was, and shineth as much as ever it did. We use to say, when the body of the Moon is betwixt the *Sun* and us, that the Sunne is eclipsed, when indeed not the *Sun* but the earth is darkned, the Sun loseth not one of its glorious beams. God is oft near us, as he was unto *Jacob*, and we are *not aware of it*. God was near the holy man *Asaph*, when he thought him afarre off.

Psa. 73.27.

I am continually with thee (saith he) *thou holdest me by my right hand.* *Mary* in her weeping passion could not see Christ before her, he seemed a stranger unto her. So long as we can keep our eye upon God, we are above the reach of sin or any spirituall danger.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Of confirming this trust in God. Seek it of God himselfe. Sins hinder not: nor Satan. Conclusion and Soliloquy.

§. 1.

BUt to return to the drawing out of our trust by *waiting*. Our estate in this world

world is ſtill to wait, and happy it is that we have ſo great things to wait for; but our comfort is, that we have not only a *furniture of graces*, one ſtrengthning another as ſtones in an arch, but likewiſe God vouchſafeth ſome drops of the ſweetneſſe of the things we *waite* for, both to encreaſe our deſire of thoſe good things, as likewiſe to enable us more comfortably to wait for them. And though we ſhould dye waiting, only cleaving to the promiſe with little or no taſte of the good promiſed; yet this might comfort us, that there is a life to come, that is a life of ſight and ſenſe, and not only of *taſte* but of *fulneſſe*, and that for *evermore*. Our condition here is to live by faith and not by ſight, only to make our living by faith more lively, it pleaſeth God when he ſees fit, to encreaſe our *earneſt* of that we look for. Even here God waits to *be gracious* to thoſe *that wait for him*. And in heaven Chriſt waits for us, we are part of his *fulneſſe*; it is part of his joy that *we ſhall be where he is*, he will not therefore be long without us. The bleſſed Angels and Saints in heaven wait for us. Therefore let us be content as ſtrangers, to wait

Chap. 34.

2 Pet. 1. 5.

Pſa. 16. ult.

Eſa. 30. 18.

Eph. 1. 23. Joh. 17. 24.

Chap. 34.

a while till we come home, and then we *shall be for ever with the Lord*; there is our eternal rest, where we shall enjoy both our God and our selves in perfect happinesse, being as without need, so without desire of the least change. When the time of our departure thither comes, then we may say as *David*, *Enter now my soul into thy rest.* This is the *rest which remaineth for Gods people*, that is worth the *waiting* for, when we *shall rest from all labour of sinne and sorrow* and *lay our heads in the bosome of Christ for ever*.

It stands us therefore upon to get this great Charter more and more confirmed to us (that God is our *God*) for it is of everlasting use unto us. It first begins at our entring into *covenant* with God, and continues not onely unto *death*, but entreth into heaven with us. As it is our heaven upon earth to enjoy God as ours, so it is the very heaven of heaven, that there we shall for ever behold him, and have communion with him.

Degrees of our propriety in God. 1.

The degrees of manifesting this propriety in God are divers, rising one upon another, as *the light clears up by little and little till it comes to a perfect day.* 1. As the ground

ground of all the reſt, we apprehend God to be a God of ſome peculiar perſons, as *favourites* above others. 2. From hence is ſtirred up in the ſoul a reſtleſſe deſire, that God would diſcover himſelfe ſo to it, as he doth to thoſe that are his, that he would *viſit our ſouls* with the ſalvation of *his choſen*. 3. Hence follows a putting of the ſoul upon God, an adventuring it ſelf on his mercy. 4. Upon this, God when he ſeeth fit, diſcovers by his ſpirit that he is ours. 5. Whence followeth a dependance on him as ours, for all things that may carry us on in the way to heaven. 6. Courage and boldneſſe in ſetting our ſelves againſt whatſoever may oppoſe us in the way, as the three young men in *Daniel*, *Our God can deliver us if he will. Our God is in heaven*, &c. 7. After which ſprings a ſweet ſpirituall ſecurity, whereby the ſoul is freed from ſlaviſh feares, and glorieth in God as *Ours* in all conditions. And this is termed by the *Apoſtle*, not only *aſſurance*, but the *riches of aſſurance*. Yet this is not ſo clear and full as it ſhall be in heaven, becauſe ſome clouds may after ariſe out of the remainder of corruption, which may ſomething over-

Chap. 34.
2.
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Chap. 34.

caſt this *aſſurance*, until the light of Gods countenance in *heaven* for ever ſcatters al.

There being ſo great happineſſe in this nearneſſe betwixt God and us, no wonder if Satan labour to hinder the ſame, by interpoſing the guilt and hainouſneſſe of our ſins, which he knows of themſelves will work a *ſeparation*: But *theſe* upon our firſt ſerious thought of *returning*, will be removed. As they could not hinder our meeting with God, ſo they may cauſe a ſtrangeneſs for a time, but not a parting, a hiding of Gods countenance, but not a baniſhing of us from it. *Peter* had denied Chriſt, and the reſt of the Apoſtles had left him all *alone*: Yet our Saviour after his *Reſurrection* forgets all former unkindneſſes, he did not ſo much as object it to them, but ſends *Mary*, who her ſelf had been a great ſinner, as an Apoſtle to the *Apoſtles*, and that *preſently*, to tell them that he was *riſen*, his care would have no delay. He knew they were in great heavineſſe for their unkindeneſs. Though he was now entred into the *firſt degree* of his glory, yet we ſee his *glory* made him not forget his poor Diſciples. Above all he was moſt careful of *Peter*, as deeper in ſin than

Joh. 20.

than the *reſt*, and therefore deeper in ſorrow. *Go tell Peter*, he needs *moſt* comfort. But what is the meſſage? that *I aſcend* not *to my Father* alone, but *to your Father*, not to *my God* only, but to *your God*. Chap. 34.

And ſhall not we be bold to ſay ſo after Chriſt hath taught us, and put this claim into our mouthes? If once we let this hold go, then Satan hath us where he would, every little croſſe then dejects us. Satan may darken the *joy* of our ſalvation, but not take away the God of our ſalvation. *David* after his crying ſin of murther, prayes, *Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation*, this he had loſt; but yet in the ſame *Pſalme* he prayes, *Deliver me from bloud O God, thou God of my ſalvation*; therefore what ſoever *ſenſe*, *reaſon*, *temptation*, *the law*, or *guilt upon conſcience* ſhall ſay, Nay however God himſelf, by his ſtrange carriage to us may ſeeme to be, yet let us caſt our ſelves upon him, and not ſuffer this plea to be wrung from us, but ſhut our eyes to all, and look upon God *All-gracious* and *All-ſufficient*, who is the *Father*, the begetter of *comfort*, *the God* the Creator *of conſolation*, not onely of things that may *comfort*, but of the Pſa. 51.

2 *Cor.* 1. 3.

Chap. 34.

comfort it ſelfe conveyed through theſe unto us. *Who is a God like unto our God, that paſſeth by the ſins of the remnant of his people?* This ſhould not be thought on without admiration, and indeed there is nothing ſo much deſerves our wonderment as ſuch mercy, of ſuch a God, to ſuch as we.

Since God hath *avouched us to be his peculiar people*, let us avouch *him*; and ſince he hath paſt his word for *us*, let us paſſe our words for him that we will be *his*, and ſtand for him, and to our power advance his cauſe. Thus *David* out of an enlarged ſpirit ſaith, *Thou art my God, and I will praiſe thee*, thou art *my God, and I will exalt thee*. Whatſoever we engage for God, we are ſure to be gainers by. The true Chriſtian is the wiſeſt Merchant, and make the beſt adventure. He may ſtay long, but is ſure of a ſafe and a rich return. A godly man is moſt wiſe for himſelfe. We enter on Religion, upon theſe terms, to part with our ſelves, and all, when God ſhall call for it.

§. 2.

God much rejoyceth in ſinners converted, as monuments of his mercy, and becauſe

Chap. 34.

because the remembrance of their former sins, whets them on to be more earnest in his service, especially after they have felt the sense of *Gods* love, they even burn with a holy desire of honouring him, whom before they dishonoured, and stand not upon doing or suffering any thing for him, but cheerfully embrace all occasions of expressing obedience. God hath more work from them than from others; why then should any be discouraged:

Neither is it sins after our conversion, that nullifie this claim of God to be *ours*. For this is the grand difference betwixt the *two* covenants, that *now* God will be mercifull to our sinnes, *if our hearts by faith be sprinkled with the blood of Christ*. Though *one* sin was enough to bring condemnation, yet the free gift of grace in Christ, is of *many* offences unto justification. And we have a sure ground for this, for the righteousnesse of Christ is Gods righteousnesse, and God will thus glorifie it, that it shall stand good to to those that by faith apply it against their daily sins, even till at once we cease both to *live* and *sin*. For this very end was the *Son of God* willingly *made sin*, that we might be freed from

Chap. 34.

from the ſame. And if all our ſins laid upon Chriſt could not take away Gods love from him, ſhall they take away Gods love from us, when by Chriſts bloud our ſouls are purged from them?

O mercie of all mercies, that when we were once his, and gave away our ſelves for nothing, and ſo became neither his, nor our own, that then he would vouchſafe to become ours, and make us *his* by ſuch a way, as all the Angels in heaven ſtand wondring at, even his Sons not only taking our *nature* and miſerable condition, but our *ſinne* upon him, that that being done away, we might through Chriſt have boldneſſe with God as *ours*, who is now in heaven appearing there for us, until he bring us home to himſelfe, and preſents us to his Father for *his* for ever!

Think not then only that we are Gods and he *ours*, but from what love and by what glorious means this was brought to paſſe; What can poſſibly diſable this claim, when God for this end hath founded a covenant of peace ſo ſtrongly in Chriſt, that ſin it ſelf cannot diſanull it? Chriſt was therefore manifeſt, *that hee might*

1 Joh. 3. 5, 8

might destroy this greatest *work of the devil.* Forgivenesse of sins *now* is one chief part of our portion in God. It is good therefore not to pore and plod so much upon sin and vilenes by it, as to forget that mercy that rejoyceth over *judgement.* If we once be Gods, though we *drink this deadly poyson,* it *shall not hurt us.* God will make a medicine, an antidote of it; and for all other evils, the fruit of them is by Gods sanctifying the same, the *taking away sin* out of our natures; so that lesser evils are sent to take away the greater. If God could not over-rule evils to his own ends, he would never suffer them. Chap. 34. Mar. 16. 18.

§. 3.

I have stood the longer upon this, because it is the one *thing needfull,* the one thing we should desire, that this one God, in whom, and from whom is all good, should be ours. All promises of all good in the new covenant, spring first from this that God *will be ours, and we shall be his.* What can we have more? and what is in the world lesse that will content us long, or stand us in any stead, especially at that time when all must be taken from us? Let us put up all our desires for all things Jer. 32.

Chap. 34.

things we ſtand in need of, in this right we have to God in Chriſt, who hath brought God and us together; he can deny us nothing, that hath not denied us himſelf. If he be moved from hence to do us good, that we are his. Let us be moved to fetch all good from him, on the ſame right that he is *ours*.

The perſwaſion of this will free us from all puſillanimity, ſowlineſſe, and narrowneſſe of ſpirit, when we ſhall think that nothing can hurt us, but it muſt break through God firſt. If God give quietneſſe, who ſhall *make trouble?* If God be with us, who can be againſt us? This is that which puts comfort into all other comforts, that maketh any burthen light; This is alwaies ready for all purpoſes: Our God is a preſent and a ſeaſonable helpe. All evils are at his command to be gone, and all comforts at his command to *come*. It is but goe *comfort*, goe *peace* to ſuch a mans heart, cheere him, raiſe him; go *ſalvation*, reſcue ſuch and ſuch a ſoul in diſtreſſe. So ſaid and ſo done preſently. Nay, with reverence be it ſpoken, ſo far doth God paſſe over himſelf unto us; that he is content himſelfe to be commanded

Job 34. 29.

by

by us. *Concerning the work of my hands command you me*: lay the care and charge of that upon me. He is content to be outwraſtled and over-powered by a ſpirit of *faith*, as in *Jacob*, and *the woman of Canaan*, to be as it were at our ſervice. He would not have us want any thing wherein he is able to help us. And what is there wherein God cannot help us? If Chriſtians knew the power they have in heaven and earth, what were able to ſtand againſt them? What wonder is it if *faith* overcome the world, if it overcomes him that made the world? that faith ſhould be Almighty, that hath the Almighty himſelf ready to uſe all his power for the good of them to whom he hath given the power of himſelf unto? Having therefore ſuch a *living fountain* to draw from; ſuch a *center* to reſt in, having all in *one*, and that one *Ours*, why ſhould we knock at any other door? we may goe boldly to God *now*, as made *ours*, *being bone of our bone, and fleſh of our fleſh*. We may go more comfortably to God, than to any Angel or *Saint*. God in the ſecond perſon hath vouchſafed to take *our nature* upon him, but not that of *Angels*. Our *God*, and our Chap. 34.

Man

Chap. 34. *Ad curiam Dei sui, Dei tui, præcessit Deus tuus homo tuus, tunica tua indutus, illic assidue pro nobis interpellat*, Aug. Heb. 5. 1.

Man, our God-man is ascended unto the high court of heaven to his and our God, clothed with our nature. Is there any more able and willing to plead our cause, or to whom we may trust businesse with, than he, who is in *heaven for all things for us, appertaining to God?*

It should therefore be the chiefe care of a Christian, upon knowledge of what he stands in need of, to know where to supply all. It should raise up a holy shame and indignation in us, that there should be so much in God, who is so neare unto us, in Christ, and we make so little use of him. What good can any thing do us if we use it not? God is ours to use, and yet men will rather use shifts and unhallowed policies, than be beholding to *God*, who thinks himself never more honoured by us then when we make use of him. If we beleeve any thing will doe us good, we naturally make out for the obtaining of it. If we beleeve any thing will hurt us, we study to decline it. And certain it is, if we beleeved that so much good were in God, we would then apply our selves to him, and him to our selves; whatsoever virtue is in any thing, it is conveyed by application

application and touching of it; that whereby we touch God, is our *faith*, which never toucheth him, but it draws virtue from him; upon the first touch of faith, spirituall life is begun. It's a bastard in *nature*, to beleeve any thing can work upon another without *spiritual* or *bodily* touch. And it is a Monster in *Religion*, to beleeve that any saving good will issue from God, if we turn from him, and shut him out, and our hearts be unwilling. Where unbelief is, it bindes up his power. Where *faith* is, there it is betwixt the soul and God (as betwixt the Iron and the Loadstone) a present closing and drawing of one to the other. This is the beginning of *eternall life*, so to *know God the Father, and his Son Christ*, as thereby to embrace him with the arms of *faith* and *love*, as *ours*, by the best title he can make us, who is truth it self. Chap. 34. Joh. 17. 4.

Since then our happinesse lies (out of our *selves*) in *God*, we should go out of our selves for it, and first get into Christ, and so unto God in him; and then labour by the Spirit of the Father and the Son, to maintain acquaintance with both, that so God may be ours, not onely in *covenant*, but

Chap. 34. but in *Communion*, hearkning what he will say to us, and opening our spirits, disclosing our wants, consulting and advising in all our distresses with him. By keeping this acquaintance with God, *peace and all good is conveyed to us.*

Job 22. 21.

Thereafter as we maintain this communion further with him, we out of love study to please him, by exact walking according to his commands; then we shall feel encrease of peace as our care encreaseth, then he will *come and sup with us*, and be free in his refreshing of us. Then he *will shew* himself more and more to us, and *manifest still* a further degree of presence in joy and strength, until communion in grace, ends in communion in glory.

But we must remember (as *David* doth here) to desire and delight in God *himself*, more than in any thing that is Gods; It was a signe of S. *Pauls* pure love to the Corinthians, when he said, *I seek not yours, but you.* We should seek for no blessing of God so much as for himself.

What is there in the world of equall goodness to draw us away from our *God?* If to preserve the dearest thing we have in the world, we break with God, God will take

take away the comfort we look to have by it, and it will prove but a dead contentment, if not a torment to us. Whereas if we care to preserve communion with *God*, we shall be sure to find *in* him whatsoever we deny *for* him; *honour, riches, pleasures, friends, all*; so much the sweeter, by how much we have the more immediatly from the spring head. We shall never find God to be our God more, than when for making of him to be so, we suffer any thing for his sake. We enjoy never more of him than then.

Chap. 34.

At the *first* we may seek to him, as rich to supply our wants, as a Physician to cure our souls and bodies, but here wee must not rest till we come to rejoyce in him as our friend, and from thence rise to an admiration of him for his own excellencies, that being so high in himself, out of his goodnesse would stoop low to us. And we should delight in the meditation of him, not onely as good to us, but as good in himself; because goodnesse of bounty springs from goodnesse of disposition; *he doth good because he is good.*

A naturall man delights more in Gods gifts, than in his grace. If he desires *grace*,

Chap 34.

Dona Dei sine Deo.

it is to grace himselfe, not *as* grace, making him like unto God, and issuing from the first grace the free favour of God; by which means men come to have the gifts of God without God himself. But alas, what are all other *goods* without the chief *good*? they are but as flowers, which are *long* in planting, in cherishing and growing, but *short* in enjoying the sweetnesse of them. *David* here joyes in God himself, he cares for nothing in the world, but what he may have with his favour, and whatever else he desires, he desires only that he may have the better ground from thence to praise his God.

§. 4.

The sum of all is this, *The state of Gods dear children in this world, is to be cast into variety of conditions*, wherein they consisting of nature, flesh, and spirit, every principle hath its owne and proper working. They are sensible as *flesh and bloud*, they are sensible to discouragements as *sinfull* flesh and bloud; but they recover themselves as having a higher principle (*Gods Spirit*) above flesh and bloud in them.

In this conflicting state, every principle labouring to maintain it self, at length by

by help of the Spirit, backing and strengthening his owne work, grace gets the better, keeping nature within bounds, and suppressing corruption. And this the soul (so far as it is spirituall) doth by gathering it self to it self, and by reasoning the case so far, till it concludes, and joyns upon this issue, that the only way to attain sound peace, is (when all other means fail) *to trust in God*. And thereupon he lays a charge upon his soul to do, so it being a course grounded upon the highest reason, even the unchangeable goodnesse of God, who out of the riches of his mercy, having chosen a people in this world, which should be to the glory of his *mercy*, will give them matter of setting forth his *praise*, in shewing some token of good upon them, as being those on whom he hath fixed his love, and to whom he will appear not onely a *Saviour*, but *salvation* it self. *Nothing but salvation*; as the Sun is nothing but light, so whatsoever proceeds from him to them, tends to further salvation. All his wayes towards them leade to that; which wayes of his, though for a time they are secret, and not easily found out, yet at length God will

Chap. 34.

Chap. 34.

be wonderful in them, to the admiration of his enemies themselves, who shall be forced to say, God hath done great things for them; and all from this ground, that God is *our God in covenant*: which words are a stern that rule and guide the whole text.

For why should we not be *disquieted* when we are disquieted? Why should we not be cast down when we are cast down? Why should we *trust* in God as a Saviour? but that he is [*our God*] making himselfe so to us in his choisest favours: doing that for us, which none else can do, and which he doth to none else that are not his in a gracious manner. This blessed interest and intercourse betwixt Gods Spirit and our spirits, is the hinge upon which all turns: without this no comfort is comfortable; with this, no trouble can be very troublesome.

Without this assurance there is little comfort in Soliloquies; unlesse, when we speak to our selves, we can speak to God as *ours*. For in desperate cases, our soul can say nothing to it selfe, to still it selfe, unlesse it be suggested by God, Discouragements will appear greater to the soul than

than any comfort, unleſſe God comes in as ours. Chap. 34.

See therefore *Davids art*, he demands of himſelfe why he was ſo caſt down? The cauſe was apparent, becauſe there were troubles *without*, and terrours *within*, and none to comfort. Well, grant this ſaith the Spirit of God in him (as the worſt muſt be granted) yet ſaith the Spirit, *Truſt in God.* Soliloquie. *So I have.*

Why then, wait in truſting, *Light is ſowne for the righteous*, it comes not up on the ſudden, we muſt not think to ſow and reap both at once. If trouble be lengthned, lengthen thy patience.

What good will come of this?

God will wait to do thee that good, for which *thou ſhalt praiſe him*, he will deal ſo graciouſly with thee, as he will deſerve thy praiſe, he will *ſhew thee his ſalvation.* And new favours will ſtir thee up to ſing new ſongs; every new recovery of our ſelves or friends, is as it were a new life, and miniſters new matter of praiſe. And upon offering this *ſacrifice of praiſe* the heart is further enlarged to pray for freſh bleſſings. We are never fitter to *pray*, than after *praiſe*.

Chap. 54.

But in the mean time I hang down my head, whileſt mine enemies carry themſelves highly, and my friends ſtand aloof.

God in his own time (which is beſt for thee) will bee the *ſalvation of thy Countenance*, hee will compaſſe thee about with ſongs of deliverance, and make it appeare at laſt, that he hath care of thee.

But why then doth God appear as a ſtranger to me?

That thou ſhouldeſt follow after him with the ſtronger *faith* and *prayer*, hee withdrawes himſelfe, that thou ſhouldſt be the more earneſt in ſeeking after him. God ſpeaks the ſweeteſt comfort to the heart in the *Wilderneſſe*. Happily thou art not yet low enough, nor purged enough. Thy affections are not throughly crucified to the world, and therefore it will not yet appeare that it is Gods good will to deliver thee. Were thou a fit ſubject of mercy, God would beſtow it on thee.

But what ground haſt thou to build thy ſelf ſo ſtrongly upon God?

He hath offered, and made himſelfe to be [*My God*] and ſo hath ſhewed himſelfe

himselfe in former times; And I have made him *My God*, by yeelding him his Soveraignty in my heart. Besides the present evidence of his blessed Spirit, clearing the same, and many peculiar tokens of his love, which I daily do enjoy; though sometimes the beames of his favour are eclipsed. Those that are Gods, besides their interest and right in him, have oft a sense of the same even in this life, as a fore-taste of that which is to come. To the Seale of *Grace* stamped upon their hearts, God superaddes a fresh Seale of *joy* and *comfort*, by the presence and witnesse of his Spirit. And shews likewise some outward token for good upon them, whereby he makes it appeare, that *he hath set apart him that is Godly for himselfe, as his owne*. Chap. 34. Psal. 4. 3.

Thus we see that discussing of objections in the Consistory of the soule, settles the soule at last. *Faith* at length silencing all risings to the contrary. All motion tends to rest, and ends in it. God is the center and resting place of the soule, and here *David* takes up his rest, and so let us. Then whatsoever times

Chap. 34.

come, we are sure of a hiding place and Sanctuary.

FINIS.

Hab. 3, 17.

Although the fig-tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yeeld no meat, &c. yt I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Psal. 91. 1, 2.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall lodge under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortresse; My God, in him will I trust.

Psal. 73. 26.

My strength and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.

An

An Alphabeticall Table of chief things in the fore-going Treatise.

A

Actions of man, what are the principles of them. *Pag.* 198
Admire Gods love. 432
Adventure of faith makes a rich returne. 442
Affections their conflict one with another. 72
How to be ordered, 94. In case of Gods dishonour no affection is excessive. 96
Affections, why they doe not alwayes follow the judgement, 339. God most to be affected. 449
Appearance of salvation in the countenance: whence, and why. 423
Application of mercy in particular, necessary: Reasons, 435. In the wicked it is a lye, 438. It is no easie matter to say, *My God*, 439. When it is right, 447. A shame not to improve it. 461
Arguments for faith to come to God, 377
Art in bearing of troubles. 59
Art in misery to think of matter of joy. 367
Assurance of Gods favour: what we should do in the want thereof. 398

B

Back faith with strong reasons and arguments. 373
Beauty of a well-ordered soul. 122
Beauty of Christians works performed in season. 386
Bilneyes offence at a Preacher. 325
Blasphemy: temptations of blasphemy, and how checked. 315
Breach of inward peace: still look at thy self therein. 134
Books all written to amend the book of conscience. 61

C

Casting down disquiets, why. 41
Remedies against casting down. 42
Censure not Christians distempered: dangerous so to do. 37
Change of nature changeth all. 167
Changes must be fore-thought of. 115
Caution in fore-casting such changes, 123. Directions for this fore-thinking of troubles. 109
Character of a good soul. 340
Christ is salvation clothed in mans flesh. 419
Christian *Calling*, what is the true ability to it: grace, not gifts only. 365. Particular *Calling* directions for it. 367
Combats spirituall, how discerned from that of common grace and light. 76
Comfort in the Churches troubles, 370, and 425
Comfort amisse sought in sanctification, 27. Yet to have and hold *comforts*, grow up in holinesse. 28
Comforters in way of humanity, many: few in way of Christianity, 203. Graces necessary in a good *Comforter*, 205. Method of comforting, 207. A sinne not to comfort the afflicted, 210. How comfort tendred doth no good: miscarriages therein, 243
Communion with God to be sought, and how Christians have continuall ground of it. 386
Communion of friends, in watching over one another, 192. In comforting one another 195
Complain of thy self, not of God, nor others. 66
Concupiscence not severely censured by Papists. 138
Condition of life none wherein we may not exercise some grace. 131
A man can be in no condition wherein

in God is at a losse and cannot help him. 237
Confidence in our selves, how chased away. 217
Confidence for mercies, warranted to us as well as to *David*, or others. 389
Conflict of grace and corruption much casts us down, 347. Should make us trust in God the more. 348
Conflicts in mans soul: kindes and degrees of them. 71
Conscience not clear brings disquietnesse. 20
Constancy how it quiets the spirit.
Consideration; the best objects of it. 166
Contentment; to bee framed to our selves, and how, 111. It is a speciall meane of quieting the soul. *Ibid.*
Continuance of sinne: or sins of continuance dangerous, 323. And how to be dealt withall. *Ibid.*
Corruption how fit curbed or repressed by God. 153
Corruptions remaining in a holy heart are naturall, they would not be controuled 135. And what follows. 141
Courage a means to stablish the soul.
Court of conscience in man, 47. Why we are so backward to keepe this Court. 53

P

Deal with thy self in all afflictions, to get quietnesse. 104
Death. comfort in the hour of it, 362
In the state after death. 363
Delay not the praising of God, 402
Defects in life rise from defects in trust, 299
There is a supply for all our defects, 352
Deordination of nature to be lookt upon, and how, 149. Most needfull so to do. 120
Denial of our selves necessary herein. 126
Notes of it. 128
Desertion; then Christ should be put between God and us. 459
Despaire of mercy, no cause of it. 509
Desperation may be, where is onely a generall apprehension of mercy. 436
Difference between a carnall Christian and another. 304
Discouragement in affliction incident to Gods owne people, 10. Causes hereof in our selves; privative, 18. Positive, 20. We are apt to cast down our selves, 38. Reasons against discouragement; the hurt that comes by it, 43. It crosseth our own principles, 49. In case of discouragement we should not think too much on our corruptions, 86. A godly man knows how to carry himself in discouragements. 71
Disquieted we may be for that which is not a sin to be disquieted for. 83
Disquieted we may be for that which is not best in it. *Ibid.*
Disquietnesse for sin, when it exceeds measure. 85
Disquietments proper to the soul, beside those of the body. 98
Distrust the cause of all disquiet. 185
Distempers fall, if arraigned before reason. 49
Doubting ariseth of Popish doctrine of work. 28
Duty more to be thought of, then comfort. 381
Duties to be done with united forces of spirits. 29

E

Eloquence of *Ambrose* converted *Austin*. 175
Election, not known, no hindrance to our trust in God. 441
Enemies of the Church: comfort against them, 361
Envy not their prosperity. 428
Estate of a Christian, how to be judged. 25
Event of things not to be too much forecasted. 27
Evidence of *faith* more constantly upholds the soul, then evidence of sight. 47

Evill in an holy Christian, not to be too much lookt upon 36. Nor evils of the time. 37
Evils of sinne, 79
Excellencies of God to be branched out for our several uses. 458
Exercise of grace preserves the soul. 283
Experiments of God, treasured up in the heart, would much help faith. 477
Experiences to be called to minde. 280
And communicated to others. 281
Extremities whereinto the godly are suffered to fall, and why. 278
Evils that are outward, how remedied.

F

Faith must own God especially, 433
And why. 434
It relies on a double principle. 268.
Why so requisite in Christians, 269.
It is still shaked by the devill and wicked ones, 15. It must have price set on it: and how this may be, 283, 284. In us no seeds of faith, as of obedience. 298
Fancy to be quickly limited and restrained. 169
The proper use of it. 173
Favour of God: how to preserve the sense of it. 474
Failings pardoned, where is no malicious intention. 382
Former favours make the soule more sensible of contrary impressions. 3
Friends living, spiritual priviledges by them. 197
Friends departure, comfort in it, 367

G

Galeacius Caracciolus, how converted, 175 173
God makes every man a *governour* over himself. 62
God still left to a good heart for comfort, when all others fail. 221
God only is the fit object of trust. 236
God cannot (out of Christ) be thought on comfortably. 239
God is some mens God specially. 4[illegible]
Hence is the spring of all good, 434.
When we prove this to our souls, 447.
Tokens of it, 452. Comfort by it in extremities. 456
Gods presence sweetens all places and estates. 2
Gods glory more to be regarded then our own good. 378
God is many salvations to his people, 418. A Rock not to be undermined, 419
Godly men, when best disposed, 103.
They can cast restraint on themselves in distempers, 58. Can make a good use of privacy. 60
Great ones, in most danger, 60. And why. 200
Greatnesse of sinne may encourage us to go to God. 319
Grief gathered to a head, will not be quieted at the first, 4. It casteth down, as joy lifteth up, 46. How to be mitigated, 193. Griefe faulty, when, 85. Even godly griefe is to be bounded, 87. How it is to be ordered aright. 90
Griefe for sinne, why we want it so much, 334. What we must doe in the want of it, 343. It is not all at first. 344
Grief of contrition, and of compassion, 91
Growth in laying claim to God, 433
Guard over the soul to be kept. 153

H

Hatred of sinne, a good signe of grace: Notes of it. 342
Heart of man not easily brought unto God. 227
Heart to be most watcht, and kept in temper. 39
Heart, though vile, shall be fitted for God, comfort and glory. 359
A Heart enlarged to praise God, is the chief deliverance. 396
Heart of Christians first cheared by God, then their countenance. 422
Help by others in discerning our estates. 247
Help, where none is, yet trust in God.

God. ibid.
Holinesse of God no discouragement to true Christians, in their many infirmities. 353
Hope, the main support of a Christian, 235. The difference of it from faith, *Ibid.* It quieteth the soul.
Hope most in a hopelesse estate: two grounds, 369. and 443.
Hour of mercy not yet past, if yeelded unto. 331
Humbled persons comforted. 332
To humble us, God need not go without us to fetch forces, 100. And we need goe no further then our selves. 335

I.

Idle life is ever a burthen to it selfe, 30
Idleneſse is the houre of temptation, 170
Imagination and opinion, the cause of much disquiet, 158. How it hurteth us, 163. How sinfull imaginations work upon the soul, 161. The remedy and cure of this evil, 164. Opportunities of helping it to bee sought and taken, 174. How it may be made serviceable in spirituall things, 177. Not impossible to rule our imagination, 210. Misconceits about them. 290
Immanuel: a name of nature, and of office. 431
Impediments should not discourage Christians. 350
Impudency in wicked men, more than in devils. 471
Inclinations of soule to the creature should be at first subdued. 294
Instinct supernatural leades the godly unto God. 376
Interest in God, the ground of trusting in him. 430
Joy and praise help each other. 387
Joy stilleth the soul. *Ibid.*
Judgement and reason well employed, will raise up a dejected spirit. 47

L

Large faith, and large object should be shaped together. 468
Latimers three prayers, all granted. 390
Law of God (extent and spiritualnesse of it) to be considered. 151
Least mercy of God must be prized. 406
Liberty Christian may not be unknown, nor yet abused. 30, 103
Life of a Christian, a life of trouble: 97
Life of Christians, a mixture of good and evil. 386
Hid. 465
We Lose our selves most by yeelding most to our selves. 55
Love such things as can returne love: 110
Love of God to be looked at in every mercy. 402
Love-tokens from God, arguing he is ours. 432
Love of God, not to be questioned: grounds. 266
Luther assured of a particular mercy in prayer. 390

M

Massacre of France terrible afterward to the King. 61
Means, whether relyed on or no. 308
Mercy of God must not be limited by mans sins, 321. It is Gods name, he pleads for it. 483
Moon in the change, neareſt the Sun: so we to God, in greateſt dejection. 16
Motions of sinne to be at first crushed, 116
Murther of the tongue. 17

N

Nature of man, since sin first came in, subject to misery and sorrow, 8 proved, 9. applyed. 310
Natures favourers, enemies of grace, 148
Nature divine, the onely counter-poyson

poyſon of ſinne. 154
Naturall righteouſneſſe in Adam. 140
Naturall ſins in us, voluntary too. 145

O

Objects of Religion or converſation, not to be ſubſtituted. 286
Offence againſt God, takes not away truſt in God. 226
Omiſſion of duties breeds trouble to the ſoul. 32
Opinions of others not to be too much heeded. 35,111
Oppoſition to ſinne in the godly is univerſall. 80
Over-joying in outward comforts, breeds trouble. 33
Outward things, no fit ſtayes for the ſoul. 288,291

P

Paſſions conflict one with another. 71
Paſſions not to be put to our troubles. 112
Paſſions hid till drawn out: and how this is. 113
Peace the Epitome of all good. 124
Perſeverance in grace warranted, and how. 349
Portion of the godly is God alone. 486
Power that we have over our ſelves, is of God. 217
Prayer needfull to keep our ſelves in temper. 57
Prayer heard: ſignes of it. 408
Prayer and praiſe depend each on other. 381,410
Praiſe in trouble more minded by the godly then their delivery, 378. Speciall times to praiſe God, 383. No eaſie matter to praiſe God aright. 396. Conditions, 404. Motives, 414. Means of performing it. *Ibid.*
Prepare for an alteration of thy eſtate and ſpirit. 37
Preſence of God with his in worſt times, what it doth for them. 384
Pride muſt ever be taken down though the ſpirit be dejected. 50
Pride and paſſion, miſchievous. 53
Promiſes of God what they are in divers reſpects. 265
Promiſes are not all reſerved for heaven, but partly verified on earth, 261
Property in God chiefly to be laboured for. 436
Providence of God makes all good to us, as himſelf is good. 238
It is a ſpecial ſtay of our Faith, 241. What God is he makes good by *providences*. Ib. *Graces* to be exerciſed in obſerving divine providence. 249

R

Reall praiſes of God neceſſary. 407
Reall things put out troubleſome thoughts. 165
Reaſon for ſinne: none at all. 374
Reaſons of a godly man are divine. 375
Relations wherein we ſtand to God, muſt be all anſwered, and how. 275
Relapſes pardonable and curable. 329
Repentance begins in the love of God, 179
Reſolution neceſſary in Chriſtianity. 396
Want of it breeds much diſquiet. 32
Reſolution firm and peremptory to be aſſumed, 229. renew it, 230. and that quickly. 231

S

Salvations of God, plentifully and manifold. 415
To be thought upon in trouble, 420
The golden chain of it. 437
Satan and his inſtruments, ſtill caſting down the godly. 12
Satans cunning in divers humours of Chriſtians, 23. To diſcourage thoſe whom God encourageth. 483
Satans ſtudy to unlooſe the heart from God. 302
And to divide between God and us.
Self-denial requiſite to praiſe God, 397
Selfe, what in the Godly, and what in others. 99
Signes of a good eſtate. 26
Sickneſſe:

Sickness: comfort in it. 357
Sin ever unreasonable amidst seeming reasons. 51
Sin is the greatest trouble, 369. Avoid not trouble by sin. ibid.
Sin sweet in committing, bitter in the reckoning. 318
Side with God in evil times. 454
Sight of God not always alike. Reasons of it. 479
Soliloquies of special use. 197
Solitarinesse ill for afflicted ones, 211
Intolerable to the wicked, why. 60
Sorrow weakens the heart. 40
Sorrow not required for it self, as sorrow. 332
No Sorrow can make satisfaction: 333. Dangerous to desire it overmuch, 337. Popery in it. Comfortable degree of sorrow for sin, when. 340
Souls most constant estate in respect of sin. 515
Soul to be cited, and pressed to give accounts. 54
Souls excellency, in reflecting on it self, and judging all its issues. 63
Soul debased by wicked men. 64
Soul should be first set in order. 67
Soul needs something beside it selfe to uphold it. 99
Souls temper when right. 88
Soul, though over-born a while, gets free again. 234
Soul, if gracious, most sensible of the want of spiritual meanes. 5. Knows when it is well with it, when ill. 6
Superstition: the force of it. 163
Symmetry of soul most lovely. 123

T

Temptation divine, what it is. 11
Thanks then best, when it tends to praising. 403
Thanks should be large. 404
Thankfulnesse never without some taste of mercy, 408. It is a special help in an afflicted condition, ibid. Excellent use of it. 417.
Thoughts to be set in order every morning. 181
Are not free, 182. Danger of that opinion, 186
Thoughts of praise should be precious to us. 362
Titles: empty Titles of goodnesse bring but empty comfort at last. 471
Our Title in God to be maintained against all cavils. 447
Trade of conversing with God, the richest in the world. 400
Triall of *trust*, whether it be right. 311
Troubles outward, appointed to help the soul inwardly. 63
Trouble inward: three-fold miscarriage of it. 68
Trust is the means to bring God and the soul together, 236. To settle trust, know the minde as well as the nature of God, 264. Trust must answer the truth of God, 269. Directions about trusting, 271. Whether we may trust to friends, riches, or helps, 285. A sin so to do. 289
Trust it self not to be trusted in. 202
Trusting should follow Gods order of promising. 296
Tryal of our selves exceeding necessary. 114

V

Victory over our selves: Signes of it, 128. How it may be obtained: 132
Uniformity necessary in the lives of Christians. 134
Unthankfulnesse to God, most sinfull, 400. Detestable to God and man, 410
Unworthiness may not keep from God, 441
There is a sanctified use of all troubles to Gods children. 123

W

Waiting on God, a necessary duty, 393. What it is to waite, 394.

Bee ever in a waiting condition: 477
Waytng difficult. Helps to wayt on God.
Will of man hath a soveraignty. 145
Will of the godly, conformable to Gods will. 379
Worldly good hath some evill, and worldly evil hath some good. 218

Y

Yet not in hell, nor at worst, a mercy and undeserved. 383
Youth to be curbed quickly. 58

FINIS.